

MOTION PICTURE REVIEWS

JANUARY

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FEATURE FILMS

BEHIND THE NEWS ♦ ♦

Lloyd Nolan, Doris Davenport, Frank Albertson, Robert Armstrong, Paul Harvey, Charles Halton. Screen play by Isabel Dawn and Boyce DeGaw. Original story by Dory Schary and Allen Rivkin. Direction by Joseph Santley. Republic Pictures.

This is another story of behind the scenes in a newspaper office but it presents the germ of a new idea. A cub reporter, winner of a six months' scholarship, is initiated into the work by having the disillusioned staff harass him in every way. However, his idealism, his enthusiasm and his refusal to accept discouragement win the approval and respect of his associates and inspire in them the desire to keep faith with the public by helping worthwhile social crusades.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Little interest
under 14

Children, 8 to 12
Long and Little
interest

BLONDIE PLAYS CUPID ♦ ♦

Penny Singleton, Arthur Lake, Larry Simms, "Daisy." Direction by Frank H. Strayer. Columbia.

Blondie's fear of the dangers associated with celebrating the Fourth of July puts a damper on *Dagwood's* and *Baby Dumplin's* jolly plans. But in seeking a safe and sound Fourth the little family encounters adventures which prove much more hazardous. This is hilarious entertainment for all.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Excellent

CHAD HANNA ♦ ♦

Henry Fonda, Dorothy Lamour, Linda Darnell, Guy Kibbee, John Carradine, Ted North, Roscoe Ates. The story of Red Wheels Rolling by Walter D. Edmonds. Screen play by Nunnally Johnson. Direction by Henry King. Twentieth Century-Fox.

In the horse and buggy days there was a depth of feeling about simple things and an intensity of enjoyment that is seldom savored in the present time when inventions are so epoch-smashing that we no longer marvel at anything. What is there nowadays that can compare with the thrill a steam calliope gave to villagers a hundred years ago when the circus paraded through the main thoroughfare? Everything was fascinating, and everyone connected with it was intriguing, come though he might, and did, from the humblest ranks of the people. "Chad Hanna" revives those happy lost days. It is done in Technicolor, as any film which really presents a circus should be, and one is absorbed by the lives of the performers from beginning to end. A boy and a girl join the circus, *Chad* because he is under the spell of *Albany Yates*, the bareback rider, and *Caroline* to escape the beatings of her ugly father. Dorothy Lamour is not hampered by long riding habits, curls and crinolines in her role as a temptress, and she manages to flash a wicked garter, but *Albany* at heart is a good sort and refuses to wreck the lives of two people she

really likes just to satisfy her vanity. Although she does not have as much footage as usual, this is one of Miss Lamour's best parts. It is a picture in which several actors are strongly individualized: Guy Kibbee, owner of the circus; John Carradine, the advance agent; Jane Darwell, unbelievably corpulent, as the circus master's wife. Henry Fonda and Linda Darnell are very appealing as *Chad* and *Caroline*. The most violent part of the picture comes when a rival circus tries to keep them out of a certain territory, and a pitched battle ensues at the crossing of a bridge, the most pathetic when the beloved old lion rolls over in death. Although it is a circus story and a good one, this is anything but a picture for children; it is far too lusty and frank in its dealings with human nature.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

CHEERS FOR MISS BISHOP ♦ ♦

Martha Scott, William Gargan, Edmund Gwenn, Sterling Holloway, Sidney Blackmer, Mary Anderson, Dorothy Peterson, Marsha Hunt, Rosemary DeCamp, Ralph Bowman. Screen play by Stephen Vincent Benet, Adelaide Heilbron, and Sheridan Gibney from a novel by Bess Streeter Aldrich. Direction by Richard A. Rowland. United Artists.

The screen version of Bess Streeter Aldrich's moving story of a woman teacher's life in a small college will be deeply interesting to adults who can read into it the compensations which balanced the heroine's frustrations. Because of its academic background it will inevitably be compared with "Mr. Chips," but it has not the dramatic appeal which gave the latter such general audience appeal. It is episodic in form, covering fifty years of service and giving more detail to the disappointments in *Miss Bishop's* life than to her understanding approach to youth's problems and her influence on the students, which, in numerous instances, were the pivotal incentives to ultimate success. Had increased footage been given this study of human relations, the character of *Miss Bishop* would have been warmer and more appealing.

The story opens when *Ella Bishop* graduates from college and is offered a place on the faculty. The changing social pattern of fifty years is unfolded as *Miss Bishop* dedicates her life to her calling and twice meets frustration in love affairs. She never marries the man who from boyhood remains her faithful suitor, but happily she dies immediately after her worth is publicly recognized and before she has to meet the inevitable reaction which would have followed her retirement.

It is Martha Scott's picture. She is ideally cast and her sensitive work is reminiscent of Helen Hayes. Although the others in the

cast are excellent, Miss DeCamp merits special mention. One of her scenes is particularly important, for it illustrates the significance of *Miss Bishop's* role as teacher, and both Miss Scott and Miss DeCamp play it beautifully. The picture is unusual and merits attention.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too mature

Children, 8 to 12
No interest

THE DEVIL'S PIPELINE ♦ ♦

Richard Arlen, Andy Devine, Jeanne Kelly, James Flavin, Francis McDonald, John Eldredge, Eddie Waller. Screen play by Paul Huston. Direction by Christy Cabanne.

While this picture contains the makings of an interesting plot, it develops into something grotesque and impossible. Much of the action is exceedingly grim. Men are thrown into a tropical prison, made to undergo unbearable hardships and farmed out as slave laborers to an oil company to fatten the bank rolls of the superintendent and his partners in crime. Not satisfied with tragedy, the makers of the picture try also to make it a comedy but without success, for Andy Devine's asinine remarks and blunderings are as fitting as laughter at a funeral. The wild battle at the end with machine guns and nitroglycerine is so overdone and unreal that even one of the participants is caught laughing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Very poor

Children, 8 to 12
Too sordid

FLIGHT COMMAND ♦ ♦

Robert Taylor, Ruth Hussey, Walter Pidgeon, Paul Kelly, Sheppard Strudwick, Red Skelton. Based on a story by Commander Harvey Haislip and John Sutherland. Screen play by Wells Root and Commander Harvey Haislip. Direction by Frank Borzage. M.-G.-M.

Made with the full consent and cooperation of the U. S. Navy and photographed at North Island, the air base at San Diego, this is one of the most authentic films on aviation to be made. The views of the planes are fascinating, in echelon formation against great banks of cumulus clouds, in stunning power drives, take-offs from the deck of an aircraft carrier and in a rescue attempt on the shores of a magnificent, towering island off the coast of Mexico. Less spectacular but none the less interesting is the life of the men in the station, experimenting on new devices, operating radio signals, performing each duty with a keen responsibility and great courage. The high morale of the unit is emphasized when a young graduate of Pensacola (Robert Taylor) comes to join the vaunted *Hell Cat* company and is held in contempt because he breaks the rules they have set for themselves. It is not until he has proved his worth by extraordinary valor that the record of his foolhardy mistakes is

erased, and he is accepted as one of them. The men's parts are well drawn, and the individual performances are admirable. Less satisfactory is the role played by Ruth Hussey, that of *Lorna Gary*, who is a better subject for a psycho-analyst than a moving picture. Posing as a pillar of bravery, she fails utterly when tragedy touches her own life, turns against her husband and finds solace in the attentions of a handsome young flyer, jeopardizing two careers in the process. Possibly women should be left out of aviation films.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
No

FLIGHT FROM DESTINY ♦ ♦

Thomas Mitchell, Geraldine Fitzgerald, Jeffrey Lynn, James Stephenson, Mona Maris, Jonathon Hale, David Bruce, Thurston Hall. Screen play by Barry Trivers from a story by Anthony Berkeley. Direction by Vincent Sherman. Music by Heinz Roemheld. Warner Bros.

This is grim entertainment but interesting and different. It is the story of a college professor of philosophy to whom a doctor promises only six months of life. He presents the hypothetical question to his associates, how each would use such time to best advantage. In the discussion he receives the suggestion that he benefit humanity by murdering a person who is a social menace. Oddly the opportunity presents itself and the professor commits the murder to free a dear friend and rid the world of one who has contributed nothing but evil during her life.

It is a maturely interesting problem with a constructive ending, for the professor discovers that no human being has the right, whatever the circumstances, to make so grave a decision on life and death. The cast is admirable and Thomas Mitchell again demonstrates his great ability and gives an impressive performance.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Grim and mature

Children, 8 to 12
No

FOUR MOTHERS ♦ ♦

Claude Rains, Jeffrey Lynn, Eddie Albert, May Robson, Frank McHugh, Dick Foran, Vera Lewis, Priscilla Lane, Rosemary Lane, Lola Lane, Gale Page. Suggested by the book, "Sister Act," by Fannie Hurst. Screen play by Stephen Morehouse Avery. Direction by William Keighley. Warner Bros.-First National.

This latest in the series of pictures about the *Lemp* family shows the four daughters married and with homes and children of their own but still united by love for one another and for *Father Kemp* and *Aunt Etta*. Their family life, complicated by marital adjustments, financial troubles, and their father's loss of his job, is made inspiring by their mutual loyalty and understanding. The fine cast gives an unusually enjoyable

performance, and this picture allays the fear created by one of its predecessors that the series was deteriorating. Claude Rains as the father is again the lovable musician who well merits the devotion of his children. The story and characterizations are believable and human enough to interest almost everyone.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Possibly little interest but otherwise suitable

GO WEST ♦ ♦

Groucho Marx, Chico Marx, Harpo Marx, John Carroll, Diana Lewis, Walter Woolf King, Robert Barrat, June MacCloy, George Lessey. Screen play by Irving Brecher. Direction by Edward Buzzell. Musical direction by Georgie Stool. M.-G.-M.

A wild race in a train, boisterous clowning, and some vulgarity are combined with excellent music to make a concoction typically Marx Bros. and, for anyone who likes the Marx Brothers, highly entertaining. The picture is a take off on Westerns and frontier melodrama.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Entertaining because of comedy action

HER FIRST ROMANCE ♦ ♦

Edith Fellows, Wilbur Evans, Marion Kerby, Judith Linden, Jacqueline Wells, Alan Ladd. Adapted from the novel by Gene Stratton Porter. Musical director, Gregory Stone. Monogram.

Patterned along the familiar lines of Mrs. Porter's popular novels this is a pleasantly sentimental comedy romance which gives Edith Fellows her first grownup role. As a young girl dominated by a selfish older step-sister who wishes to keep her in the background, she has a Cinderella-like part and plays it delightfully. The college scenes are particularly amusing, and the young people play them with zest and naturalness. The drab little student grind emerges into a beautiful butterfly, sister gets her just desserts, and there is promise of a fascinating future for a nice girl with a lovely voice. Music is an integral part of the plot. Wilbur Evans has an excellent voice and several duets by Mr. Evans and Edith Fellows are beautifully rendered.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
If interested

HUDSON'S BAY ♦ ♦

Paul Muni, Gene Tierney, Laird Cregar, John Sutton, Virginia Field, Vincent Price, Nigel Bruce, Montagu Love, Gerald Hall, Chief Thundercloud. Original screen play by Lamar Trotti. Based on the life of Radisson. Direction by Irving Pichel. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Added to the roster of recent imposing films on historical subjects is this picture of

the early days of the Hudson's Bay Company. Like some of the others it is not a very definite or complete history, but it serves to whet an interest in the subject which should lead to further study and investigation, and surely no one who sees this film will forget that the company was founded and its policy set by Pierre Esprit Radisson. When this humble French Canadian trader discovered a region where beavers, minks and sables existed in fabulous numbers he sought to interest the French in a large-scale trade project, but they set upon him and plundered him. However, with a few companions he escaped to England on a sailing vessel with a large enough cargo of furs to interest King Charles the Second, under whose reign the Hudson's Bay Company was chartered. He was noted not only for his vision in developing the country but for his fairness in dealing with the Indians, a characteristic exemplified in the picture by the shooting of a disgruntled and treacherous Englishman of noble lineage who had given the natives fire-water in return for furs. Thereby Radisson prevented a cruel and bloody warfare.

Throughout the picture interest is focussed on the pair of traders, Paul Muni as *Radisson* and the gigantic Cregar as *Gooseberry*. John Sutton satisfactorily plays *Lord Crewe* who has been banished from England but returns to act as a sort of liaison official with people at court and to provide the hero of a love story. The two ladies are attractive but given scant attention; after all they have little to do with an epic of the wilderness. Vincent Price offers a clever piece of acting as *King Charles*, and Nigel Bruce and Montagu Love are polished in their roles. But interest in the two trappers remains paramount. This is a different Muni than any which has appeared before, thoroughly French-Canadian in appearance, lithe in his deerskin jacket and leggings, swarthy, even a shade dirty, shrewd, resourceful, with a quick tongue and a twinkle in his eye, a man who considers it a compliment to be called a rogue and yet one who has the greatest integrity in his dealings with the Indians and a powerful love for his country of the North. His constant companion is Laird Cregar as *Gooseberry*, an enormous creature who knocks men's heads together with relish and bursts all barriers with ease, meanwhile remaining as good-natured as the friar of Robin Hood. In settings there is a great contrast from the primitive reaches of Canada to the elaborate court of England, but both are well done, and the direction shows zest and originality.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Long. Might
be tiring

KEEPING COMPANY ♦ ♦

Frank Morgan, Ann Rutherford, John Shelton, Irene Rich, Gene Lockhart, Virginia Weidler, Virginia Grey, Dan Daily, Jr. Screen story by Herman J. Mankiewicz. Direction by S. Sylvan Simon. M.-G.-M.

There is little new in human affairs in this simple story of courtship, marriage, quarrels and reconciliation, but it manages to be interesting. In the first place it has one of the most agreeable casts ever brought together in a family picture. Irene Rich, Frank Morgan, Virginia Weidler—all are delightfully spontaneous. Gene Lockhart even makes a Babbitty motor car dealer worth listening to, and Virginia Grey is an unusual sort of vamp, a very new 1941 edition. The director has done well in distributing interest among the various characters so that no one holds the spot-light too long. It is not a big picture at all, but it has a sincerity and charm which will endure it to many when more ambitious films pass unsung.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Amusing

Children, 8 to 12
Too mature
problems

KITTY FOYLE ♦ ♦

Ginger Rogers, Dennis Morgan, James Craig, Eduardo Cianelli, Ernest Cossart, Gladys Cooper, Odette Myrtil, Mary Treen, Katherine Stevens, Walter Kingsford, Cecil Cunningham, Nella Walker, Edward Fielding, Kay Linaker, Richard Nichols, Florence Bates. From the novel by Christopher Morley. Screen play by Dalton Trumbo. RKO-Radio.

Beautifully acted, faultlessly directed and perfectly adapted to the screen, "Kitty Foyle" should have more appeal to the general public than the novel because, while it is still the poignant, dramatic story of a girl's life, it is not the somewhat embarrassing experience of a too intimate insight into her soul. The film has made certain concessions to the screen in altering the plot, but the adaptation is a masterly one. It retains the essential problems and presents them in perfect taste.

The story is of the love of a "white collar girl" for a man who is so tied by convention and family pride that he cannot break away, although his love for her is the only really fine thing in his life. The other man in the story is an outspoken doctor who tries to erase from the girl's mind the years of her devotion to the socialite. Each offers her the best he has, and not until the last line does the audience know how she decides her course.

Ginger Rogers gives a magnificent performance, a searching, honest and beautiful portrayal of a deeply sincere woman. Her philosophical discussions with her reflections in the mirror are an effective method of expressing her thoughts and presenting her problems. The men are ideally cast: Dennis

Morgan as the scion of a wealthy old Philadelphia family, James Craig in the contrasting role of the doctor whose line of interest presupposes a life of struggle and simple living, and Ernest Cossart as *Kitty's* rascally father whose keen vision anticipates the grief which follows when she marries out of her social class. The love scenes between *Kitty* and *Wyn* are among the most beautiful ever filmed. The production is deeply moving and should have wide audience appeal, especially with women.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Mature, but essentially
sound in its philoso-
phy

Children, 8 to 12
Too mature

LET'S MAKE MUSIC

Bob Crosby, Jean Rogers, Elizabeth Risdon, Joseph Buloff, Joyce Compton, Bennie Bartlett, Louis Jean Heydt. Screen play by Nathaniel West. Direction by Leslie Goodwins. Musical direction by Roy Webb. RKO-Radio.

Although Bob Crosby is featured in this, his first screen appearance, it would seem to be Elizabeth Risdon's picture. She plays a mousey, elderly school teacher whose first attempt at composing, a popular song for school use, attracts the attention of a bandmaster and is featured as a "hit." Her adventures in New York as a celebrity are naively entertaining, although scarcely credible. Bob Crosby has looks, a pleasing personality and an excellent voice. His acting will be more assured when he has had longer experience. The band will be an attraction, although it is doubtful if the selections will make "The Hit Parade." There is a very nice feeling about the film because everyone in it is kind and gracious. There is no villain in the story, and when the lady finds that her creative ability has run its gamut, she contentedly returns to school teaching, satisfied with her one exciting fling and her niece's romance.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
No interest

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Mary Martin, Verree Teasdale, Eddie Anderson (Rochester), Virginia Dale, Theresa Harris, Richard Denning, Jack Carson, Chester Clute, The Merry Macs and the Merriell Abbott Dancers. Original screen play by William Morrow, Edmund Beloin, Ernest Pagano and Z. Myers. Produced and directed by Mark Sandrich. Paramount.

The feud of Jack Benny and Fred Allen continues on the screen and remains as unsettled as ever, an even draw. It is a matter of taste as to whether one enjoys seeing men make faces at each other, but at least the popular entertainers are visible and the humor is characteristic. Fred Allen is discovered nursing a nervous breakdown because of his rival's proximity. Fred's niece

(Mary Martin) sets out to attempt some sort of truce and ends by singing in Jack's show. A temporary compromise seems at last imminent, but the picture ends on the same note of discord. Mary Martin sings the song, *My Heart Belongs to Daddy*, which brought her into the public eye. There are several spectacular scenes and Rochester again becomes enamored with Josephine, but he has not the amusing lines he had in former Jack Benny films.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
A matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Little interest

MAISIE WAS A LADY

Ann Sothorn, Lew Ayres, Maureen O'Sullivan, C. Aubrey Smith, Joan Perry, Paul Cavanaugh, Edward Ashley. Story by Betty Reinhardt and Mary C. McCall, Jr. Screen play by Betty Reinhardt and Mary C. McCall, Jr. Direction by Edwin L. Marin. M-G-M.

Maisie rises like a skyrocket in this picture. Starting as the headless lady in a carnival, she is brought by a chance encounter to the portals of a country estate so vast in proportions and so important that she is dazzled; in fact, it is so aristocratic that the part of the butler is played by C. Aubrey Smith. Quick witted *Maisie* finds that family affairs are in a sorry state, that wealth cannot compensate for brotherly or fatherly affection or form a basis for romantic love, and *Maisie* does something about it. This is a lively picture with some interesting situations and a pleasing cast. While Lew Ayres plays the young waster who is inebriated most of the time, his condition is explained by his lack of a vital incentive in life—and *Maisie* supplies that.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Questionable because
of the drinking

Children, 8 to 12
No

MICHAEL SHAYNE, PRIVATE DETECTIVE

Lloyd Nolan, Marjorie Weaver, Joan Valerie, Walter Abel, Elizabeth Patterson, Donald McBride, Douglas Dumbrille, Clarence Kolb. Based on a novel by Brett Halliday. Screen play by Stanley Rauh and Manning O'Connor. Direction by Eugene Forde. 20th Century-Fox.

Detective story fans will find this a diverting mystery. The comedy characterizations and the dialogue are amusing, and the climax is unexpected. A wealthy man recognizing the danger his daughter is courting in her passion for gambling, engages a young detective to watch over her in his absence from the city. When a gambler with whom the girl has associated is murdered, the situation becomes serious, but the mystery is solved with the aid of the girl's delightfully amusing aunt, who is an amateur detective herself. Lloyd Nolan is excellent in his role and the supporting cast and direction are good.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Too complicated

NO, NO, NANETTE ♦ ♦

Anna Neagle, Richard Carlson, Victor Mature, Roland Young, Mrs. Broderick, ZaSu Pitts, Eve Arden, Billy Gilbert, Tamara, Stuart Robertson, Dorothea Kent, Aubrey Mather, Mary Gordon, Russell Hicks. Screen play by Ken Englund. From the musical comedy by Frank Mandel, Otto Harbach, Vincent Youmans and Emil Nyitray. Music by Vincent Youmans. Lyrics by Irving Caesar and Otto Harbach. Direction by Herbert Wilcox. Musical direction by Anthony Collins. RKO-Radio.

The film version of a musical comedy is sometimes disappointing to those who found the light and frothy unreality engaging on the stage. This screen-play places less emphasis on the musical numbers and so elaborates the plot that much of the original sparkle and lilting rhythm is lost. Miss Neagle is pleasing but not at her best as the lovely heroine who is continually devising ways to keep her philandering uncle out of trouble. The artificiality of the story may have been a handicap. She reverts to a stage technique which has none of the natural quality which made her "Queen Victoria" and "Nurse Edith Cavell" such memorable characterizations. However, a musical comedy should be taken lightly, and although many will find this version disappointing, no doubt many others will enjoy it as the laughable confection it is intended to be.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Over 14

Children, 8 to 12
No

PLAY GIRL ♦ ♦

Kay Francis, James Ellison, Mildred Coles, Nigel Bruce, Margaret Hamilton, Katherine Alexander, George P. Huntley. Story and screen play by Jerry Cady. Direction by Frank Woodruff. RKO-Radio.

Stripped down to the bare bones, this is an account of *Grace*, a "shake-down" artist of middle years and her nineteen-year-old apprentice, but who wants to get down to bones when Kay Francis is so beautiful and soft spoken and charming in all the luxury wrapping and accoutrements of modern life? After all, one is on *Grace's* side from the beginning, for it takes a good deal of courage for a middle-aged woman to admit that she is slipping and to play second fiddle to a young girl; also the men who sell prayer-books for a living and indulge in very extra-ecclesiastical activities on the side probably get what is coming to them. Many of the lines are clever. Nigel Bruce is exceptionally humorous as *Bill Vincent*, and George P. Huntley adds comedy as his successor who is handy with a check-book. Margaret Hamilton, faithful secretary and handmaid, scores with some trenchant comments. There is the contrast of fresh, young love, and little *Ellen* (Mildred Coles) finds a boy of her own age to adore.

This is obviously a play for the sophisti-

cates. It is poison for any young girl who thinks she can acquire mink coats and three-carat diamonds without even kissing the donor good-night. It requires as expert a technician as Kay Francis to get away with that—or could she?

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No. Wrong viewpoint

Children, 8 to 12
Quite impossible

SANTA FE TRAIL ♦ ♦

Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland, Raymond Massey, Ronald Reagan, Alan Hale, William Lundigan, Van Heflin, Gene Reynolds, Henry O'Neill, Guinn (Big Boy) Williams, Alan Baxter, John Littel, Moroni Olsen, David Bruce. Direction by Michael Curtiz. Warner Bros.

"Santa Fe Trail" is a stirring picture of the tragic background of the Civil War, the issues which divided friends and fanned rebellion until the bitter struggle became inevitable. The film opens in 1854 as the graduating class at West Point is addressed by Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. Even then the seeds of conflict have been planted among the classmates by the activities of *John Brown* and his followers who are smuggling slaves out of the South. After graduation a number of the young officers are sent to Leavenworth, Kansas, the farthestmost outpost of the Santa Fe Trail, to patrol the region made particularly dangerous by *Brown's* lawless and inflammatory exploits in a state where violent conflict between "free-state" and pro-slavery settlers is already beginning. The picture is memorable both because of Raymond Massey's portrayal of the fiery zealot, and because it paints the background for the irreconcilable differences which soon grew up between Northern and Southern sympathizers.

A love story is of minor interest. The young people are all well cast with Van Heflin in the role of traitor and Gene Reynolds as one of *Brown's* sons especially outstanding. Max Steiner's musical accompaniment adds greatly to the dramatic force.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting

SECOND CHORUS ♦ ♦

Fred Astaire, Paulette Goddard, Artie Shaw and his Band, Chas. Butterworth, Burgess Meredith, Frank Merton, Jimmy Conlon, Don Brodie. Original story by Frank Cavett. Screen play by Elaine Ryan and Ian McClellan Hunter. Direction by H. C. Potter. Paramount.

Movie audiences who have learned to expect unusually good entertainment from pictures featuring Fred Astaire will perhaps be disappointed in "Second Chorus," for although it is a sufficiently entertaining show with plenty of modern music by Artie Shaw's popular band, and the usual expert dancing, neither Fred Astaire's dances nor the en-

sembles are spectacular and the production lacks the sparkle of other Astaire pictures.

Two students who have spent seven years in college living on the income from their college band are finally graduated much against their wills. They go to New York and after various unsuccessful attempts to find employment with Artie Shaw's band, manage through the aid of a girl and an eccentric patron of music to get an engagement. The comedy is developed through the repeated efforts of the two musicians to double-cross each other and in Charles Butterworth's characterization of the music patron.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Entertaining if they like music

THE SON OF MONTE CRISTO ◆ ◆

Louis Hayward, Joan Bennett, George Sanders, Florence Bates, Lionel Royce, Montagu Love. Screen play by George Bruce. Direction by Roland V. Lee. Music by Edward Ward. Edward Small Productions, Inc.

Although this is named for Dumas' hero, the lineage of the story is direct from Graustark. Moreover, let no references to present dictators confuse the issues of the case; this is as far removed from present day affairs as any fairy tale, and one can sit back and view with a clear conscience the tribulations of a princess held in durance vile by a gigantic villain and know that she will be rescued by the noble and agile hero. *Gurko Lanan*, a military dictator, takes over the small Balkan kingdom of Lichtenstein and keeps the Grand Duchess a virtual prisoner until *Monte Cristo* rallies the oppressed citizens to his aid in overthrowing the usurper. Louis Hayward makes this *Monte Cristo* a sprightly chap, and the character calls for the pretense of foppish stupidity which is always an added fillip of amusement. Joan Bennett is decorative, and George Sanders plays objectionable parts as efficiently as anyone in recent years; he is a very capable actor. The action is so fast and furious that at times it almost fails to make connections. Costumes, carriages and castle interiors of an elaborate, glittering court make the picture a joy to the eye.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Too exciting

THIS THING CALLED LOVE ◆ ◆

Rosalind Russell, Melvyn Douglas, Binnie Barnes, Allyn Joslyn, Gloria Dickson, Lee J. Cobb, Gloria Holden, Paul McGrath, Leona Maricle, Don Beddoe, Rosina Galli Sig Arno. Screen play by George Seaton, Ken Englund, P. J. Wolfson. Based on a play by Edwin Burke as produced by Patterson McNutt. Directed by Alexander Hall. Columbia.

The subject of "This Thing Called Love" is one which requires a masterly touch to avoid being crude: a young, attractive wife

wishes to keep her marriage on a platonic basis and not to have children until she is sure that they will not be involved in a possible divorce action. Unfortunately the needed subtlety in direction is lacking, and the director seems to feel that the audience will miss the implications if they are not obvious. Mr. Douglas and Miss Russell strive hard to make it smartly sophisticated, but the film is only boisterous farce with a few comical scenes to save it from oblivion.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

THE TRAIL OF THE VIGILANTES ◆ ◆

Franchot Tone, Broderick Crawford, Mischa Auer, Andy Devine, Peggy Moran, Warren William, Porter Hall, Chas. Trowbridge. Screen play by E. E. Paramoro. Direction by Allan Dwan. Universal.

It is a frequent occurrence of late for young actors who have been identified with other types of plays to take a fling at a Western. This is Franchot Tone's turn, and while it isn't one of the best, it is quite good fun. The story follows the familiar lines of plundering and profiteering which must be overcome by brave, right-thinking men, and Franchot Tone is the young newspaper representative sent out from Kansas City to apprehend the ring-leaders. Sometimes the action is so riotous that one wonders if this is a sort of a burlesque on all Westerns. Mischa Auer and Andy Devine are the comedians, each humorous in his own way. As usual, the mountain photograph is beautiful.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Too exciting for some

VICTORY ◆ ◆

Fredric March, Betty Field, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Jerome Cowan, Sig Rumann, Margaret Mycherly, Fritz Feld, Lionel Royce. Based on the novel of Joseph Conrad. Screen play by John L. Balderston. Direction by John Crombell. Paramount.

The fact that Conrad's story which leads step by step to inevitable tragedy is altered to permit the survival of the main characters, keeps this from being a big picture and places it in the class of good melodrama. Much of Conrad has been retained. Those who remember the novel will find themselves in the atmosphere of the book, at a cheap hotel in the Dutch East Indies and a few days later on a remote island, far away in time and space, but not far enough to save the inhabitants from the murderous cupidity of three fantastic cut-throats. The characters come straight from the pages of the book. This is not Fredric March but *Axel Heyst* whose relations with other men have been so unfortunate that he seeks the existence of a hermit. This frail, big-eyed child is not Betty Field, but the pitiful little pianist of a

shabby, women's orchestra, sold to a lustful hotel-keeper and taken to the island by *Heyst* because he cannot be cruel to anyone. It is not Sir Cedric Hardwicke but a gambler as deadly as a cobra, and so with the others. If the action moves slowly with a measured tread, that too is Conrad, and it only serves to increase suspense and the feeling of doom. The chief criticism is that it does not attain a strong enough crescendo at the close; one feels that the conflict between two such vitally different forces should occur with greater impact.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Unsuitable

Children, 8 to 12
No

SHORT SUBJECTS

PANTRY PIRATE ♦ ♦

Walt Disney Productions.

Pluto sneaks past the negro cook on the trail of an appetizing ham, stumbles over a box of washing powder and becomes a bubble maker every time he sneezes. While the Disney artistry is not as apparent as in some of his shorts, it is excellent pantomime, full of amusing detail. All ages.

THE MARCH OF TIME NO. 5 ♦ ♦

No. 5, Vol. VII. Labor and Defense, 1941.

While "March of Time" numbers always offer telling facts and figures, this survey is below the usual standard. Several labor leaders are presented, asked to say a few words and passed by. There is no particular

bias; the good work accomplished by unions is recounted, followed by the warning that some of the leaders are racketeers. The material is poorly organized, and the photography is not above the average news reel film.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Fair

Children, 8 to 12
Uninteresting

GROWING UP ♦ ♦

Narrated by Dr. Allen Roy Dafoe. Produced by Frank Donovan. Released by RKO Pathe.

Dr. Dafoe gives the narration in connection with this picture, showing various milestones in the lives of the Quintuplets from birth to the present day. There is no particular story, but this lack is more than compensated for by the human appeal of the children. One charming scene shows them laboriously learning to knit for the Canadian soldiers. The most moving incident is their reception of a recent broadcast by Princess Elizabeth.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Very Good

Children, 8 to 12
Excellent

PICTURE PEOPLE ♦ ♦

No. 4. RKO-Pathe.

Everyday life of some of the motion picture people is shown, following their hobbies and living as normal individuals: Gene Autry, Rosemary Lane, Dick Arlen, Carole Lombard, even Charlie McCarthy. Devoid of the glamor of the screen, they prove to be natural and likeable people. All ages.

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MOTION PICTURE REVIEWS

FEBRUARY

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CONCERNING DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Documentary films, in contrast with theatrical entertainment subjects, are concerned with everyday lives of individuals, their jobs, the public utilities which serve them, the social forces which surround them. To all of us the world which concerns a stratum of society other than our own exists only objectively. For example: we may have little personal comprehension of the daily occupations of the manual laborer, of the skillfully trained hands and eyes of those occupied in interlocking crafts; we are personally unaware of the intricate, far reaching changes in American and Canadian industry due to the new need for defense; and we are perhaps ignorant of what these changes portend as related to "other democratic, growing, younger nations."

The documentary film was originally developed in England by an enthusiastic group of young people led by John Guerson and Paul Rotha, and later a growing number of producers and directors contributed to the movement. England, up to the present has been the main source of these valuable productions which place a definite emphasis on human relations. In America, Pare Lorenze is one of the outstanding names connected with this type of production. Robert Joseph Flaherty is another. Mr. Flaherty made "Nanook of the North," "Moana," "Man of Aran" all of which made history in their appeal to theatre audiences. He is now making a documentary for the United State government called "The Land." Two of Pare Lorenze's more recent films are other illuminating examples of the tremendous interest films may attain without condescending to pure romantic fiction. "Plough That Broke the Plains" shows how our midcontinent was turned into a dust bowl and "The River" is a portrait of the Mississippi River, its size, its terrifying power in flood and its usefulness when curbed and properly controlled. "The City" and the "March of Time" series and certain Hollywood studio short subjects which have also reached our theatre screens are documentary in feeling although the treatment given them changes them from their English models.

Today there is an increasing source of supply of documentaries. The social and eco-

conomic changes through which the world is passing stimulate production of pictures which show objectively and subjectively the trends of the present day. Schools have reference catalogues which list educational films, and an interesting monthly publication called *Film News*—"world wide news of documentary and educational motion pictures," because of its timeliness, should be of great interest to teachers and to community leaders in social work. A recent number tells of Canadian government releases which "place a new emphasis on the relationship between Canada and Western nations;" of New Zealand releases on occupational subjects; of American nature films; sport films; agriculture films; health films; documentaries released by various government departments; and experimental subjects re-edited from Hollywood feature films which deal with human relations and are selected and distributed by a commission of experts. We mention only a few sources listed in *Film News*. For those interested in keeping up to date on available material, both 16mm and 35mm, the address is: Film News, (John McDonald, editor), published by American Film Center, Inc., 45 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City, New York.

In the 16mm field there is also a new series on religious subjects which is another example of the trend in visual education. These films are produced by Rev. James K. Friedrich at Cathedral Films Studio, Hollywood. Mr. Friedrich produced the feature film "The Great Commandment" now released by 20th-Century Fox. Three 16mm—two reel subjects are now ready for release. They are "A Certain Nobleman," "The Child of Bethlehem" and "The Prodigal Son." They expound no doctrine and are simple, clear picturizations of Bible stories. With each goes a study guide for Sunday school discussion. The pictures are interesting, very well told for children, nicely photographed and ably acted. Care has been taken to give a faithful impression of the social background of the period. A number of churches are taking the service which in time should have a complete program.

FEATURE FILMS

THE ALDRICH FAMILY IN LIFE WITH HENRY ♦ ♦

Jackie Cooper, Leila Ernst, Eddie Bracken, Fred Niblo, Hedda Hopper, Kay Stewart, Moroni Olson, Rod Cameron. Story and screen play by Clifford Goldsmith and Don Hartman. Direction by Jay Theodore Reed. Paramount.

Henry, a favorite radio character, comes to life in the person of Jackie Cooper. His propensity for getting into trouble is established when he tries to qualify for a trip to Alaska by earning a hundred dollars in a home-made soap project. His business seriously conflicts with a mushroom-canning scheme of his father, and for a while he is in disfavor with his parents as well as with a majority of the townsfolk. At times the comedy situations are overdrawn to the point of farce. Resembling the "Jones Family" chronicles more than those of the "Hardy" clan, here is another of the group pictures which please many audiences by treatment of everyday episodes.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

ARKANSAS JUDGE ♦ ♦

Leon Weaver, Frank Weaver, June Weaver, Roy Rogers, Spring Byington, Pauline Moore, Frank M. Thomas, Veda Ann Borg, Eily Malyon, Loretta Weaver. Based on novel "False Witness" by Irving Stone. Adaptation by Ian Hunter, Ring Lardner, Jr., and Gertrude Purcell. Direction by Frank McDonald. Republic Pictures.

Peaceful Valley is an ideal, friendly, kindly community until a widow's mite is stolen and suspicion centers on the woman who has done everyone's odd jobs. Happiness disappears; friends turn against each other. Finally the mob spirit runs rampant until the culprit confesses and peace again returns to the valley. The tale is told simply with kindly humor interspersed. There are several excellent bits of acting. *Abner* (Leon Weaver) is very good. Spring Byington gives a sympathetic characterization as the charwoman who is unjustly suspected of theft. Eily Malyon, as *Widow Smithers*, is a vicious old woman. The film has a lesson of tolerance and trust and is an entertaining melodrama.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
No, because of
one emotional
scene

BLACKOUT ♦ ♦

Conrad Veidt, Valerie Hobson, Hay Petrie, Esmond Knight, Raymond Lovell, Charles Victor, Paddy Browne. Screen play by Michael Powell and Brock Williams; original story by Emeric Pressburg. British National-United Artists.

Anyone who likes an exciting spy melodrama will get his money's worth in "Blackout." The opening scene is aboard a neutral vessel stopped for investigation by the British. On board are *Miss Sorenson*, who turns out to be in the British Secret Service, Nazi agents who are following her, and *Mr. Pidgeon*, a mysterious English gentleman. When *Miss Sorenson* and *Mr. Pidgeon* leave the ship without authority, they are followed by the Captain. The rest of the action takes place in a London blackout when the Captain and the lady have fallen into the hands of the Nazi agents and are attempting to escape. The photography and atmospheric details are excellent and the acting is extremely good. The story is sometimes hard to follow and the characters and motives are not always clearly defined, but the film as a whole has an atmosphere of realism that makes it unusually interesting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Mature and very heavy

Children, 8 to 12

No

COME LIVE WITH ME ♦ ♦

James Stewart, Hedy Lamarr, Ian Hunter, Verree Teasdale, Donald Meek, Adeline de Walt Reynolds. Original story by Virginia Van Upp. Screen play by Patterson McNutt. Direction by Clarence Brown. Musical score by Herbert Stothart. M.-G.-M.

Although a number of films have been made on the theme of a marriage without substance, existing only to provide a title of "Mrs." to some damsel in distress, there is more authority for the situation presented here than in most of them. *Johnny*, a young Viennese refugee in this country without a passport, is bluntly told by an immigration officer that her one chance to remain in the land of the free is to marry an American. She has a patron, or something like that, who likes to take her out because it makes him feel young, but he cannot very well marry her because he has a wife; so *Johnny* tracks down a starving writer in Central Park and makes him a business proposition, all very cut and dried at \$17.80 per week. That the relationship does not remain on a cash and carry basis is foreordained. However, it is not what happens but the way it happens that makes this an entertaining picture. James Stewart has a way of making a character seem very true to life. As *Bill Smith* he is awkward, crusty, defeated for the moment, but never quite down, and for all who have a sympathetic feeling for the underdog there is satisfaction in seeing him overcome his handicap and win the silken, starry-

eyed *Johnny* (Hedy Lamarr). Ian Hunter and Verree Teasdale play the worldly-wise publisher and his wife with distinction, and there is a vignette of a panhandler by Donald Meek that is almost perfect. Dialogue is clever, provocative, but not off-color; for the most part the treatment is sophisticated, and it is only towards the end, when the scene is shifted to the country, that the action slows down and the comedy thins out and begins to pall. The last part could be cut to advantage.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Not suitable

Children, 8 to 12

No

DOOMED CARAVAN ♦ ♦

William Boyd, Russel Hayden, Andy Clyde, Minna Gombel, Morris Ankrum, Georgia Hawkins, Trevor Bardette. Direction by Lesley Selander. Paramount-Harry Sherman.

Hopalong Cassidy shows a flair for detective work in this picture. *Jane Travers*, who operates a wagon-freight line across dangerous frontier territory asks for troops to guard her caravan; these soldiers are waylaid by bandits and wiped out, and it is only the quick thinking of *Hopalong* which saves the day. Like most of the series, this one has good riding and scenic effects, plenty of action and some colorful characterizations.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Yes

Children, 8 to 12

A little difficult to interpret

FANTASIA ♦ ♦

Leopold Stokowski and music as played by the Philadelphia Orchestra. Production supervision by Ben Sharpsteen. Story direction by Joe Grant and Dick Huemer. Musical direction by Edward H. Plumb. Musical Film Editor, Stephen Csilag. Recording by William E. Garity, C. O. Slyfield, J. N. A. Hawkins. Fantasound recorded by RCA and reproduced by specially designed RCA Fantasound theatre equipment developed in collaboration with Walt Disney Studio. Photographed in Multiplane Technicolor. Walt Disney Production.

Motion pictures, with the exception of a few little-known "abstract" films, have heretofore used music as the accompaniment to action and for the creation of moods. Because "Fantasia" reverses the process and visualizes music, it must be evaluated from a new point of view. As a pioneer in a new form of art, it is foreordained to draw forth controversy, but as entertainment for the average movie public it offers a new and stimulating experience in visual and emotional appeal as well as the opportunity to hear the beautifully recorded music of great composers played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Leopold Stokowski. Its seven separate parts are all magnificent achievements in the combining of color, sound and movement. The subject matter and treatment are so varied that

everyone should find something to suit his personal taste: classic simplicity, delicate fantasy, harsh, stunning modernism, delicious satire, and the overwhelming emotional impact of the waves of sound which engulf the entire theater with the antiphonal choir's rendition of Schubert's "Ave Maria." Each part is interpreted in a style of drawing appropriate to its own subject matter and to the type of musical composition it illustrates. Colors are used which have never before been seen in photography. "Fantasound" is, in itself, a significant advance in recording which may revolutionize films. Stokowski describes its effect as follows: "greater definition of melodic line and contrast of tone quality or timbre; also, greater spatial diffusion, so that the music will vibrate equally throughout the theater, every voice in the orchestra having clear articulation, yet all the voices blending into one impression." The musical compositions are as follows: *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor* by Bach, *The Nutcracker Suite* by Tchaikowsky, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* by Dukas, *Rite of Spring* by Stravinsky, *The Pastoral Symphony* by Beethoven, *Dance of the Hours* by Ponchielli, *Night on Bald Mountain* by Moussorgsky, *Ave Maria* by Shubert. To see and hear "Fantasia" is a delightful and enriching experience.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Delightful

Children, 8 to 12
Too long and emotional for under 10

HIGH SIERRA ◆ ◆

Humphrey Bogart, Ida Lupino, Allan Curtis, Arthur Kennedy, Joan Leslie, Henry Hull, Henry Travers, Jerome Cowan, Minna Gombell, Elizabeth Risdon, Barton McClain, Cornell Wilde, Donald McBride, Paul Harvey, Isobel Jewel, Willie Best. From the novel by W. R. Burnett. Adapted by John Huston and W. R. Burnett. Direction by Raoul Walsh. Warner Bros.

"High Sierra" will have its followers, particularly among men. It is stark melodrama distinguished by an excellent cast and by good performances by Humphrey Bogart and Ida Lupino. It is the story of a paroled criminal who returns to his trade, this time to "pull" an even bigger job under the directions of the "Master Mind" who directs the activities from his death bed. The plot moves swiftly to a violent end when two accomplices die horribly in an automobile accident and Bogart is chased into the High Sierras, trapped by a posse and finally shot when he goes to the rescue of a pet dog. Sympathy is thrown to him because of certain worthy characteristics no doubt inherent in even the worst of mankind. As an example of crafts-

manship the picture excels in its field. As entertainment it is questionable except for those hardy spectators who get vicarious thrills from violent and shocking action.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

THE INVISIBLE WOMAN ◆ ◆

Virginia Bruce, John Barrymore, Charlie Ruggles, John Howard, Oscar Homolka, Edward Brophy, Donald McBride, Margaret Hamilton. Direction by A. Edward Sutherland. Musical direction by Charles Previn. Universal.

This is a quite absurd affair which stretches the imagination to the breaking point, but is nevertheless enjoyable if one is in an irresponsible mood. The story concerns a process of invisibility invented by a queer old professor who advertises for a girl to assist him as the object of his vanishing trick. Gangsters, hearing of the invention, foresee its usefulness in their activities and steal the machine, but its manipulation is a shade too complicated for them, and it is eventually recovered. The picture abounds in trick photography, reaching a climax when only a part of the girl materializes to the consternation of everyone present. The cast is good and the music is cleverly interpolated to set the mood for the supernatural manifestations.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
A little difficult to interpret

MR. AND MRS. SMITH ◆ ◆

Carole Lombard, Robt. Montgomery, Gene Raymond, Jack Carson, Philip Merivale, Lucille Watson, Wm. Tracy, Chas. Halton, Esther Dale, Emma Dunn, Betty Compson, Patricia Farr, Wm. Edmunds, Adele Pearce. Direction by Alfred Hitchcock. RKO.

In its opening scenes this promises to be a lively, sparkling little comedy. But as it progresses from one absurd complication to another it loses its originality. A well-to-do young couple who have lived happily together for three years discover that, owing to a technicality, their wedding ceremony was not legal. The husband learning of this, plans to tease his wife a little and then have another ceremony, but she also discovers the situation and waits for him to tell her. When he doesn't, she decides that he has some ulterior motive and trouble begins. The good looking young partner of the husband decides it is his opportunity to win the wife, and she uses him as a balm to her pride. In the end it all turns out happily, but the situations which might have been very funny if treated with a subtle touch are merely slapstick.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Mature theme and too much drinking and quarreling

Children, 8 to 12
No

NIGHT TRAIN ♦ ♦

Rex Harrison, Paul von Herrried, Margaret Lockwood, James Harcourt, Basil Radford, Naunton Wayne. Direction by Carol Reed. 20th Century-Fox.

This film, recently made in England during the present war, is an example of thrilling melodrama which holds the audience at an almost unbearable point of suspense throughout. A scientist in Czecho-Slovakia learns that the Nazi Blitzkrieg is about to occur. To protect his secret plans for a new type of steel plate he leaves immediately for England, but his daughter is caught and detained. Her escape from a concentration camp is cleverly maneuvered by the Nazis in order to trick her into disclosing the whereabouts of her father. The succeeding reels are magnificently executed. The girl fails to recognize where confidence may be placed. She and her father travel to Switzerland, followed by secret police, both Nazi and English, and finally escape in one of the most exciting sequences imaginable. The only relief from the sustained suspense is given by the two cricket-playing Englishmen who will be remembered as furnishing the fun in "The Lady Vanishes." It is a mystery film which no one enjoying that type of melodrama should miss seeing. It is well acted and splendidly directed.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good: If this type is enjoyed

Children, 8 to 12
Too exciting for most

PRIDE OF THE BOWERY ♦ ♦

Leo Gorcey, Bobby Jordan, Kenneth Howell, Mary Ainslee, Bobby Stone, Donald Haines, David Gorcey, Sunshine Sammy Morrison, Kenneth Harlan, Nick Stuart, Lloyd Ingraham. Direction by Joseph H. Lewis. Monogram Pictures Corp.

With the CCC camp as its locale and the beneficial effects of the camp upon the boys as its theme, this might have been a much more worthwhile picture than it is, but it loses significance because the constructive activities of the camp life are made incidental to the exploits of the central character, a Bowery prize fighter, who never entirely submits to camp discipline and who gets favorable recognition by attempting to cover up the dishonesty of a pal, Leo Gorcey of "Dead End" fame, as the undisciplined youth, gives a convincing portrayal.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Possible

Children, 8 to 12
No

ROLLING HOME TO TEXAS ♦ ♦

Tex Ritter, Slim Andrews, Virginia Carpenter, Eddie Dean, Jack Rutherford, Minta Duffree, Walt Shrum, Cal Shrum and His Rhythm Rangers. Directed by Al Herman. Monogram Pictures.

This is an unsophisticated western made after the usual pattern, but embroidered with

an unusual number of cowboy songs which are nicely fitted into the plot and pleasingly sung by Carl Shrum and his Rhythm Rangers. It is photographed against beautiful scenery in the vicinity of Prescott, Arizona. The story can be easily followed and contains no objectionable features if one accepts the villainy of wicked sheriffs and a good deal of shooting as necessary elements. The hero, a deputy marshal, and his followers are wholesome types and there is plenty of humor introduced by a dumb but faithful helper and his mule.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Good

ROMANCE OF THE RIO GRANDE ♦ ♦

Caesar Romero, Patricia Morrison, Lynne Roberts, Ricardo Cortez, Chris Pin Martin, Aldrich Bowker, Jos. McDonald, Pedro de Coroba, Inez Palange, Raphael Bennett, Trevor Bardette, Tom London. Direction by Herbert I. Leeds. 20th Century-Fox.

Caesar Romero carries on the traditions of the *Cisco Kid* and with the aid of *Gordito* (Chris Pin-Martin) plays Good Samaritan to a deserving soul. Romero is ideally cast and, as usual, in the series, his exploits are dependably entertaining. It is a story of love, intrigue, and heroism, simply told and competently enacted. The setting of the old Spanish estate in the southwest and the magnificent scenery superbly photographed add to the interest and enjoyment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Good

THE SAINT IN PALM SPRINGS ♦ ♦

George Sanders, Wendy Barrie, Paul Guilfoyle, Jonathan Hale, Linda Hayes. From the character created by Leslie Charteris. Direction by Jack Hively.

The titular hero of these mystery tales as played by George Sanders always gives a definite tone to the productions; he is suave, well-dressed, good-looking, a shade too supercilious in manner and enunciation. In this film the surroundings are strictly first class, including a club car and drawing room of the Super Chief and a stylish resort hotel in Palm Springs. The treasure involved is not gold or jewels but three amazingly valuable one-cent postage stamps which travel from person to person so frequently that it becomes a sort of game like "Button-button, who's-got-the-button?", difficult to follow but not highly dramatic. There is a certain nonchalance about law-breaking and a cold-bloodedness about the murders, which have crept into other "Saint" pictures, giving them a dubious ethical standing, and those qualities while modified are apparent in this one.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not too good

Children, 8 to 12
No

SO ENDS OUR NIGHT ◇ ◇

Fredric March, Margaret Sullavan, Glenn Ford, Frances Dee, Anna Sten, Erich von Stroheim, Allan Brett, Joseph Cawthorn, Leonid Kinskey, Alexander Granach, Roman Bohnen, William Stack, Hans Schumm. Screen play by Talbot Jennings, adapted from novel by Eric Maria Remarque. Direction by John Cromwell. Production designed by William Cameron Menzies. Music by Louis Gruenberg. Producers, David Loew and Albert Lewin. United Artists.

"So Ends Our Night" has been faithfully adapted from the novel "Flotsam" by Eric Maria Remarque. It is a singularly objective picture of the wanderings of that great mass of human beings, men and women refugees without passports who were driven from one country to another, wanted by none, and forced over the borders of each in turn to fend as best they might until moved on. The period is 1937, covering the annexation of Austria. It is a tragic drama tracing the hopeless sufferings of people who, because of political beliefs or racial "taints" were denied citizenship. It is expertly produced and acted.

Fredric March plays the political refugee *Joseph Steiner*. His magnificent performance is deeply moving. *Steiner* becomes interested in a couple of youngsters, a sensitive, lonely boy who is half Jewish, played with exceptional appeal by Glenn Ford, and a young Jewess, a University student and trained laboratory technician whom Miss Sullavan, as usual, makes entirely real and human. The man steels the boy to harden himself and accept the challenge presented. To both, his encouragement and help mark the difference between the will to live and surrender to complete discouragement. His own tragic life has the only ending compatible with his philosophy. There are a number of other arresting performances, Eric von Stroheim, Joseph Cawthorn, Leonid Kinskey, Anna Sten, Alexander Granach, Frances Dee: in fact a large cast seems uniquely chosen for roles which give a remarkable impression of the period and the emotions which motivate the characters.

The musical score by Louis Gruenberg adds much to the emotional effect. The settings by William Cameron Menzies and photography directed by William Daniels, A.S.C., are exceptionally fine. John Cromwell's direction and the screen play by Talbot Jennings are notably restrained. The production offers a problem which may have grown too familiar through press and lecture to have deep personal meaning any more. This will shock the spectator out of any complacent acceptance of an outrageous fact. It is well worth seeing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Very sad

Children, 8 to 12
Unnecessary

TALL, DARK AND HANDSOME ◇ ◇

Caesar Romero, Virginia Gilmore, Milton Berle, Charlotte Greenwood, Sheldon Leonard, Stanley Clements, Frank Jenks, Barnett Parker, Mark Lawrence, Paul Hurst, Frank Bruno, Anthony Caruso. Original screen play by Karl Tunberg and Darrel Ware. Direction by H. Bruce Humberstone. 20th Century-Fox.

Apparently this picture is intended to present gangsterism in a satirical light, but satire soon gives way to sentiment and the original mood is lost. Caesar Romero as *Shep Morrison* (*Tall, Dark and Handsome*) is a soft-hearted gangster who does not believe in killing, but instead keeps his victims locked in the cellar of his home. *Pretty Willie*, his rival, has no compunctions about murder and when he realizes *Shep's* weakness he has him taken for a ride. The beautiful part about it all is that *Shep* escapes with his intended bride to safety and happiness in South America while *Pretty Willie* goes to prison. The acting and suspense are good enough to carry the picture but there is some confusion as to whether the production is entirely humorous or just another gangster melodrama.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Ethically poor

Children, 8 to 12
No

VIRGINIA ◇ ◇

Madeleine Carroll, Fred MacMurray, Stirling Hayden, Helen Broderick, Carolyn Lee. Based on a story by Edward H. Griffith and Virginia Van Upp. Screen play by Virginia Van Upp. Direction by Edward H. Griffith. Paramount.

There is none of the bitterness between North and South in this picture; rather there is an explanation of the difference in ideals which leads to misunderstanding. A beautiful young girl from the New York stage returns to the ancestral home in Virginia which she has inherited and little by little settles back into the life and traditions of her ancestors. Her neighbor on one side is a Northerner, successful and efficient; on the other side are a Southerner and his small daughter to both of whom she is irresistibly drawn. The acting is simple and natural. Madeleine Carroll is lovely as *Charlotte Dunterry*; Fred MacMurray and Stirling Hayden are good contrasting types, and the small girl, Carolyn Lee is a winning child. Technicolor brings out the beauty of the old Southern house and plantation scenes. "Virginia" is a very pleasing production in the romantic vein.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Too mature in theme

WESTERN UNION ◇ ◇

Robt. Young, Randolph Scott, Dean Jagger, Virginia Gilmore, John Carradine, Slim Summerville, Chief Willis Martin, MacLane Russell Hicks, Victor Kilian, Minor Watson, George Chandler. Screen play by Robt. Carson from the novel by Zane Grey. Direction by Fritz Lang. 20th Century-Fox.

Western Union is both a super western and a frontier drama of the progress of civilization as exemplified in the stringing of the trans-continental telegraph wires joining Omaha and Salt Lake City. The usual conflict between progress and prejudice is personified by two gun-toting men, one a reformed outlaw who works for the company, the other a leader of a guerilla band of white men who, disguised as Indians burn and pillage and incite the real Indians to impede the work of the Western Union men. The picture has smooth continuity, exciting action, gorgeous scenic effects in magnificent technicolor, enough realism to be convincing and enough interest centered in the characters to develop a sympathetic story. It is rousing entertainment forcefully bringing to the spectator an appreciation of the terrible difficulties encountered by the pioneers who opened up our continent.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting and violent but interesting



DOCUMENTARY FILMS

CHRISTMAS UNDER FIRE ◇ ◇

Documentary Films.

The Christmas of 1940 as experienced in England is heart rending. The news camera seeks out the soldiers on guard in the fields, the man in the streets, the pitiful celebrations for the children and the little Christmas tree in the underground shelter. But through it all is felt the undaunted courage of the English, an inspirational lesson for all.



POWER OVER THE LAND ◇ ◇

Documentary produced for Rural Electrification Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Directed by Jarvis Jores, commentary by Stephen Vincent Benet, narrated by William P. Adams. Music by Douglas Moore. Photography by Floyd Crosby and Arthur Ornitz. Released by RKO.

This is the story of what electricity means to the farmer. It tells the story of the William Parkinson family and their neighbors who together formed the Belmont Electric Cooperative at St. Clairsville, Ohio. From all reports it is a very human and impressive picture of "a pattern of life which much of America has forgotten." It is released by RKO and will be shown where audiences request it.

SHORT SUBJECTS

MARCH ON, MARINES ◇ ◇

Warner Bros.

This is a beautiful picture in Technicolor, depicting the life of two young brothers in the Marine Corps from enlistment to the day they pass their examinations for Annapolis. Romance enters the story when they meet the admiral's daughter. It is another of the short subjects made to interest the public in various branches of the military service.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Interesting

Children, 8 to 12
Yes



MORE ABOUT NOSTRADAMUS ◇ ◇

M.-G.-M.

This is a highly interesting short subject about Nostradamus, a little known scholar of the sixteenth century, whose book is among the archives of the British Museum. He was chief cosmetician for Catherine de Medici and her maids until he hit upon a method of mathematical divination of the future; thereafter he turned all his talents to prophecy. An earlier short set forth his program up to the time of the World War; this film interprets his prophecies to the present year and beyond, and while it encourages a tendency to wishful thinking, no one who believes in the democracies can fail to feel courage in its message.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Interesting

Children, 8 to 12
Needs older evaluation

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FEATURE FILMS

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SHORT SUBJECTS

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The Happiest Man on Earth

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FEATURE FILMS

ADAM HAD FOUR SONS ♦ ♦

Ingrid Bergman, Warner Baxter, Susan Hayward, Fay Wray, Richard Denning, Johnny Downs, Robert Shaw, Charles Lind, Billy Ray, Steven Muller, Wallace Chadwell, Bobby Walberg, Helen Westley, June Lockhart, Pietro Sosso, Gilbert Emery, Renie Riano, Clarence Muse. Screen play by William Hurlburt and Michael Blankfort from the novel "Legacy," by Charles Bonner. Direction by Gregory Ratoff. Produced by Robert Sherwood. Columbia.

Here is a deeply moving study of family life. A gracious American home is presided over by a beautiful and lovely mother and a devoted father. They import from abroad a young governess, *Emilie*, whose understanding care of their four sons completes the harmonious circle. Then the mother dies, leaving her legacy of the four boys. The second tragedy is the financial panic which wipes out the *Stoddard* firm. The older boys are sent away to school, and the governess must return home. After ten years, at the time of the first World War, *Adam Stoddard* has rebuilt his fortune and he recalls *Emilie*, who had been so dear to all of them. The family seems reunited again.

But into the harmonious and devoted circle comes the bride of the eldest son, a war bride whom he met at a training camp. The two

women represent opposite poles in standards of conduct. The young wife brings discord and ugliness while the governess strives with all integrity to save the family. The dramatic import of the film is this struggle between the two women in their relations to the others. It is a battle of loyalty and decency against the undermining influence of a ruthless character. The situations and the implications are frankly daring, but they are handled in good taste. The characters are not subtle and are broadly painted. The casting is excellent. *Adam Stoddard* is one of Warner Baxter's best roles. He plays it with dignity and deep sincerity. Ingrid Bergman is ideal as *Emilie*. She seems to radiate an inner beauty of soul which the part calls for, and this strength illuminates the picture. Susan Hayward is exceptionally good as the seductive and malicious woman who has married without love and whose boredom precipitates the denouement. Helen Westley makes a delightful *Aunt Philippa*, an eccentric, worldly old lady who appears only too briefly in the action. The boys are well chosen, and June Lockhart does a nice bit as the girlish sweetheart of the youngest boy. The film is a fine example of an intelligent adaptation of a good story, and the direction is brilliant.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too mature

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable

ANDY HARDY'S PRIVATE SECRETARY ♦

Lewis Stone, Mickey Rooney, Fay Holden, Ann Rutherford, Sara Grayson, Kathryn Grayson, Ian Hunter, Gene Reynolds, George Breakston, Todd Karns, Addison Richards. Screen play by Jane Murfin and Harry Ruskin, based on story by Katharine Brush. Direction by George B. Seitz. M-G-M.

Andy is growing up, not perpendicularly but emotionally. He is only a high school kid on the eve of graduation, and he still makes "boners" which are pretty serious at times, but withal there is a faint shadow of greater maturity and of less bombast in his behavior, and this is a heartening sign in a lovable character. *Andy's* experience in this episode of the *Hardy Family* are thoroughly delightful. He is class president and chairman or director of all the final graduation activities, and it is little wonder that the honor and responsibilities are a bit overwhelming. School work suffers and his sympathies outweigh his good judgment in an important instance, but because he is fundamentally fine and because the influence of his splendid father is showing results, all ends happily.

It is a jolly picture. A new character played by Kathryn Grayson, a charming and talented young girl, adds interest. Her voice is beautiful and she sings several songs which are integrated into the action. The *Judge* and *Andy* have their helpful talks, which one feels will eventually result in making *Andy* no less amusing but certainly more endearing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

BACK STREET ♦ ♦

Charles Boyer, Margaret Sullivan, Richard Carlson, Frank McHugh, Frank Jenks, Tim Holt, Peggy Stewart, Samuel S. Hinds. Screen play by Bruce Manning and Felix Jackson. Based on the novel by Fannie Hurst. Direction by Robert Stevenson. Universal.

"Back Street" convincingly illustrates the saying, "Man's love is of man's life a thing apart, 'tis woman's whole existence," for it tells the story of a woman who relinquishes almost every human association to become the adored but often neglected mistress of a man whose life is filled with other interests. For those who like emotional entertainment the film has many assets. It has the advantage of excellent casting and fine direction; the period costumes and settings are charming; and the story of deep and lasting love is sincerely and beautifully portrayed by Mr. Boyer and Miss Sullivan. But even for those who enjoy shedding tears the death scene seems unnecessarily painful. Great credit

must be given, however, to both cast and production staff for their artistic handling of the theme as a whole.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Unsuitable

Children, 8 to 12
No

BLONDIE GOES LATIN ♦ ♦

Penny Singleton, Arthur Lake, Larry Sims, Daisy, Ruth Terry, Jonathan Hale, Danny Mummert, Irving Bacon, Janet Burston, Tito Guizar. Screen play by Richard Flournoy and Karen DeWolf. Story by Quinn Martin. Based on Comic strip created by Chic Young. Musical director, Morris Stoloff. Direction by Frank R. Strayer. Columbia.

Blondie has become an institution with many movie fans, and thus her departure in "going Latin" will be a disappointment. Penny Singleton sings and dances pleasingly, but competition in this line with other stars is hazardous, while her position as *Blondie* has no rival.

The story is farcical. *Mr. Dithers*, in search of health, invites *Dagwood*, *Blondie*, *Baby Dumpling* and *Daisy* to go on a pleasure trip to South America. Their delight is unbounded. Just before sailing a business deal requires that *Dagwood* disembark. The circumstances which prevent this, the complications which arise thereafter, and *Blondie's* reactions provide the plot. The fun is not so spontaneous as usual in these episodes of family life, *Baby Dumpling* and *Daisy* have less important parts, and *Blondie* moves out of character in a rather surprising manner. *Dagwood*, however, shows his real ability with the drums in an amusing manner, and additional talent is introduced in the person of Tito Guizar, who sings beautifully, accompanying himself on the guitar. The disappointment in the film is due to the change in pattern of the popular "Blondie" series.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Disappointing to many

Children, 8 to 12
No

BUCK PRIVATES ♦ ♦

Lee Bowman, Alan Curtis, Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Andrews Sisters, Jane Frazee, Nat Pendelton, Leonard Elliott, Dora Clement. Direction by Arthur Lubin. Universal.

"Buck Privates" presents a humorous picture of selectees and their training. It has a slight plot which serves as a background for the antics of Bud Abbott and Lou Costello and the vaudeville acts of the Andrews sisters. Some army maneuvers are included to give a patriotic flavor, and the spoiled rich boy who has manliness drilled into him is a build-up for army camp life. The film is an enjoyable one of its type.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Probably interesting

CONVOY ♦ ♦

Clive Brook, John Clements, Edward Chapman, Judy Campbell, Penelope Dudley-Ward, Edward Rigby, Charles Williams. Screen play by Patrick Kirwan and Pen Tonnysen. Direction by Pen Tonnysen. Michael Balcom-RKO release.

Much of "Convoy" is in the nature of a documentary film, and there are actual scenes of the Royal Navy in action during the present war, shown with the consent and co-operation of the British government. The action covers twenty-four hours of warfare between a German pocket battleship and U-boats attacking a British convoy of ships evacuating Jewish and Polish refugees from Norway. This is stark realism, but it is some of the finest which has been shown in war films, gripping and terrible and magnificent, German efficiency pitted against a undefeatable British morale. The plot seems unimportant by contrast. A captain of a ship finds that one of his officers is the man who has run away with his wife, but in the end it is service of the government which makes personal tragedies seem trivial.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No; too terrible

THE GIRL IN THE NEWS ♦ ♦

Margaret Lockwood, Barry K. Barnes, Emlyn Williams, Roger Livesey, Margaretta Scott, Wyndham Goldie, Basil Radford. From the novel by Roy Vickers. Screen play by Sidney Gilliat. Direction by Carol Reed. 20th Century-Fox.

Circumstantial evidence builds a strong case against a young nurse in the course of two murder trials. This is a serious type of murder drama, too tense for some tastes, and although the coordination is not perfect, there are many interesting angles. When a patient takes an overdose of sleeping tablets, the nurse narrowly escapes conviction, and when the same drug is involved in another death her guilt seems established. There are subtle touches of characterization, telling details, and authenticity of background which make this an unusual picture, although it may not be so exciting as American pictures of the same type.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Mature

Children, 8 to 12
Not at all

GOLDEN HOOF ♦ ♦

Jane Withers, Charles (Buddy) Rogers, Katherine Aldridge, George Irving, Buddy Pepper, Philip Hurlick. Direction by Lynn Shores. 20th Century-Fox.

A famous racing farm is sold to a capitalist whose only interest is to make money on the horses. A young girl and her pal, an appealing colored boy, are heart-broken over this arrangement and she persuades her grandfather to buy a horse which is on its last legs. How they lose the race but win

the money is the nucleus of the tale. At times the action drags, but Jane Withers gives an excellent portrayal of the trials and tribulations of adolescent youth. Buddy Rogers and Philip Hurlick are also very good. All the thrills of the race course appear without the vulgarities common to the theme. Views of the horses will delight animal lovers.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Enjoyable

THE HARD-BOILED CANARY ♦ ♦

Allan Jones, Susanna Foster, Margaret Lindsay, Lynne Overman, Grace Bradley, William Collier, Sr., Heimo Haitto, Kaye Connor, William Chapman, Dolly Loehr, Patricia Travers, Richard Bonelli, Richard Hageman, Ira Petina, Tandy Mackenzie, Fay Helm, Esther Dale, Deems Taylor, Calif. Junior Symphony Orchestra and Choral Club of University of So. Calif. Screen play by Frederick Jackson. From a story by Andrew L. Stone and Robert Lively. Based on an idea by Ann Ronell. Directed and produced by Andrew L. Stone. Paramount.

Here is a delightful film, full of youthful enthusiasm, beautiful music and a spirit of worthwhile endeavor. The setting is a music camp for young people, located on the wooded shore of a mountain lake. Here the boys and girls spend the summer practicing hours a day individually and in orchestras and choral groups, subject to strict camp rules, but enjoying all the activities of outdoor life along with their work. Through the interest of the camp director's son, a young music hall singer is given a scholarship. She is a product of an orphanage and of several years in a burlesque show, and at first is an extremely disturbing element in the camp, but with her remarkable voice and the friendship of some of the young campers she finally wins popularity and success. Along with Susanna Foster several other remarkably talented and accomplished musicians are featured, notably Heimo Haitto and Dolly Loehr.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Delightful

Children, 8 to 12
Good

IN OLD COLORADO ♦ ♦

William Boyd, Russell Hayden, Andy Clyde, Margaret Hayes, Morris Ankrum, Sarah Padden. Screen play by Norton S. Parker and J. Benton Cheney. Based on characters created by Clarence E. Mulford. Direction by Howard Bretherton. Paramount.

We have learned to count upon certain standards in a "Hopalong Cassidy" film. This one runs true to form, with fine photography of hard-riding, cattle stampeding, and beautiful scenery. Also true to form, William Boyd in the role of *Hopalong* rids the community of rustlers and straightens out the affairs of cattle owner *Ma Woods* and her beautiful daughter. The film is well cast and the plot is better than average.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

THE LADY EVE ♦ ♦

Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda, Charles Coburn, Eugene Palette, William Demarest, Eric Blore, Melville Cooper, Martha O'Driscoll, Janet Beecher, Robert Grieg, Dora Clement, Luis Alberni. Written and directed by Preston Sturgis. Screen play based on story by Monckton Hoffe. Musical score Sigmund Drumbold. Paramount.

"Lady Eve" is an extremely sophisticated comedy with a novel and amusing plot. Henry Fonda steps out of the homespun type of role into that of an intelligent and attractive man-of-the-world who unwittingly falls in love with a card-shark traveling on the same ocean liner. When her profession is made known to him he renounces her, but their paths cross again and in revenge she masquerades as a titled English woman and recaptures his love. When they are married she fabricates a past for his edification which is much more lurid than the life she has led. The situations are absurdly funny, and Preston Sturgis once more demonstrates his ability to write and direct a picture which is uniquely entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Unsuitable

Children, 8 to 12
No

THE MAD DOCTOR ♦ ♦

Basil Rathbone, Ellen Drew, John Howard, Barbara Allen (Vera Vague), Ralph Morgan, Martin Kosleck, Kitty Kelly, Hugh O'Connell. Screen play by Howard J. Green. Direction by Tim Whalen. Paramount.

In spite of the lurid advertising with which this film is being heralded, it is actually an extremely interesting, well-acted and technically high class production. However, since it is a study of the obsessions of a homicidal maniac, it will no doubt have only a limited audience appeal.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Morbid and unwholesome

Children, 8 to 12
Impossible

MEET THE CHUMP ♦ ♦

Hugh Herbert, Shemp Howard, Lewis Howard, Anne Nagel, Jeanne Kelly, Kathryn Adams, Ed Gargan, Henry Martin. Screen play by Alex Gottlieb. Directed by Edward F. Cline. Universal.

Hugh Herbert in the role of an eccentric man who is pretending to be crazy, "woowoo's" his way through this absurd farce which, unless you are crazy about Hugh Herbert, will not offer much entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Worthless

Children, 8 to 12
Too poor and too confusing

MELODY FOR THREE ♦ ♦

Jean Hersholt, Fay Wray, Walter Woolf King, Schuyler Standish, Patsy Lee Parsons, Donnie Allen, Leon Tyler. Original screen play by Walter Ferris and Lee Loeb. Music by C. Bakaleinikoff. Direction by Erle C. Kenton. Produced by Stephen Lang. RKO.

This is one of the most pleasing of the

Dr. Christian series partly because the simple, direct story is suited to the kindly, unassuming character, and partly because a musical element is smoothly incorporated into the picture. The doctor uses his influence to reunite his part-time nurse, *Mary Stanley*, with her ex-husband, now a famous conductor whose plane is grounded in the neighborhood by a convenient if slightly improbable stroke of fate. The situation assumes added importance because *Mary's* young son has inherited his father's genius and the development of his gift for music hangs in the balance. Schuyler Standish has a sensitive face and yet is sufficiently boyish for *Billy*, and he knows how to handle a violin, although the actual performance is contributed by the brilliant musician, Toscha Seidel. Jean Hersholt and Fay Wray seem very human. There are a number of small-town characters, old and young, who add color and amusement; among the children, Leon Tyler as *Clarence* is most original.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

MURDER AMONG FRIENDS ♦ ♦

Marjorie Weaver, John Hubbard, Cobina Wright, Jr., Mona Barrie, Douglas Dumbrille, Sidney Blackmer. Directed by Ray McCarey. Produced by 20th Century-Fox.

In this mixed up comedy murder-mystery, people drop dead like June-bugs, and nobody knows why until a crack-brained young lady comes upon a clue. A group of friends have insured their lives jointly with the provision that the last survivor will get the whole amount of the policy. Obviously somebody wants to be the lucky man, but is he the purveyor of the poisoned cigarettes? The film is just as silly as the synopsis would lead one to suspect, and although Marjorie Weaver is a clever comedienne, it is not funny enough to make up for the inanities.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
No

NICE GIRL? ♦ ♦

Deanna Durbin, Franchot Tone, Walter Brennan, Robert Stack, Robert Benchley, Helen Broderick, Ann Gwynne, Ann Gillis, Elizabeth Risdon, Nana Billings, Tommy Kelley, Marcia Mae Jones. Screen play by Richard Connell and Gladys Lehman. Based on play by Phyllis Duganne. Direction by William A. Seiter. Produced by Joe Pasternak. Universal.

The tile is indicative of the film. It is a nice but not important picture. The plot concerns the three daughters of a professor of dietetics, who yearns for a fellowship so that he may give all his time to vitamins. One daughter (Deanna) helps him feed his rabbits and sings at the village social. An other daughter (Ann Gwynne) wants to be an actress and emotes to keep herself in

practice. The youngest (Ann Gillis) is in the stage aptly known as "boy conscious." With Robert Benchley playing their father, the stage is set for humor.

It is a thin little story given body by directorial touches, but it gives Deanna a chance to play the glamour girl in borrowed clothes. When a strange young man visits the home on scientific business, all the girls set their caps for him, Deanna no less actively than the others. She even goes sophisticated to the young man's amusement and acute embarrassment. The village gets excited and begins to gossip scandalously, but all is set right, of course. It is amusing and innocuous, although the touch of sophistication is a departure for Miss Durbin. She sings charmingly, but the songs are disappointing in view of those usually allotted her. The cast is excellent. Franchot Tone is delightful as the romantic interest, and Robert Stack equally so as the boy at home whose matter-of-fact love making has stirred the hornet's nest, but who is really Deanna's heart-beat; Robert Benchley is excellent as the parent, although one wishes he had had more opportunity to display his ability in comedy. The picture is above general average as entertainment, but is not up to the standard of "Spring Parade."

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
If interested

RAGE IN HEAVEN ♦ ♦

Robert Montgomery, Ingrid Bergman, George Sanders, Lucile Watson, Oscar Homolka, Philip Merivale, Aubrey Mather, Matthew Boulton. Screen play by Christopher Isherwood and Robert Thoren, adapted from novel by James Hilton. Direction by W. S. Van Dyke II. M.-G.-M.

Philip Monrell, played by Robert Montgomery, is introduced to the audience when a Parisian psychiatrist describes a patient in an institution to the British Consul as a dangerous paranoiac who should be returned to England and placed under supervision. He is known to the doctor by an assumed name and he escapes while they are discussing him. In England again, seemingly a charming, presentable young man, he resumes his life under his mother's roof. Mr. Montgomery's role is similar in effect to that of the psychopathic criminal, which he made memorable in "Night Must Fall." This plot builds tremendous suspense during the scenes where he meets and marries a lovely refugee, assumes the heavy responsibilities of the estate, and gradually shows the irrational symptoms of his disease, but the latter half of the story does not sustain the excitement. A loyal friend is tried for his murder, and a last minute reprieve is made possible through the

appearance of the Paris physician who learns of the trial and comes to analyze the crime. During these scenes the plot seems less well-knit, but while the film is extremely macabre, Robert Montgomery's interpretation is intensely interesting and there are excellent performances by Ingrid Bergman, George Sanders, Oscar Homolka and Lucile Watson.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No value

Children, 8 to 12
No

RIDE, KELLY, RIDE ♦ ♦

Eugene Pallette, Marvin Stephens, Rita Quigley, Mary Healy, Richard Lane, Charles D. Brown, Chick Chandler, Dorothy Peterson, Lee Murray, Frankie Burko, Cy Kendall, Hamilton McFadden. Based on a story by Peter B. Kyne. Direction by Norman Foster. Produced by 20th Century-Fox.

This is a pleasantly entertaining race track film with a likeable juvenile, Marvin Stephens, as the center of interest. The youth, known as *Corn Cob Kelly* because of his farm origin, is a protege of *Duke*, a veteran jockey trainer played by Eugene Pallette. How, under *Duke's* kindly supervision, he learns to handle a winning mount and to maintain his integrity in spite of the conspiring of gamblers and crooked riders, makes an appealing story. Pallette and young Stephens give particularly sincere and satisfying characterizations.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

RIDIN' THE CHEROKEE TRAIL ♦ ♦

Tex Ritter, "Arkansas Slim" Andrews, Forrest Taylor, Betty Miles, Jack Roper, Fred Burns, Bruce Nolan, Gene Alsace, Chick Hannan, "Tennessee Ramblers." Screen play by Edmond Kelso. Direction by Spencer G. Bennet. Produced by Edward F. Finney. Monogram.

Tex and *Slim*, ridin' the Cherokee Trail toward a vacation, discover that they must postpone fishing in favor of lending a hand to settlers in distress. The Cherokee Trail is not a part of the Union and is without Federal protection. *Tex* lures the bandits over the Texas border where the law traps them and the Strip then votes to join the Union. The pace of the story is slowed by musical interludes which are pleasing in themselves, but which preclude an exacting continuity. The picture has no love angle and little plot. It is an episode in the entertaining activities of a likeable Ranger and his amusing companion *Slim*.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Probably enjoyable

ROAD SHOW ♦ ♦

Adolphe Menjou, Carole Landis, John Hubbard, Charles Butterworth, Patsy Kelly, George E. Stone. Based on the novel, "Road Show," by Eric Hatch. Screen play by Arnold Belgard, Harry Langdon, Mickell Novak. Direction by Hal Roach. Produced by Hal Roach.

This is a screw-ball movie, involving a wealthy youth who finds his fiancée is marrying him for his money. He departs expeditiously for an insane asylum where he meets *Col. Carraway*, otherwise Adolph Menjou. The two escape and join a road show where the fun waxes fast and furious. It is one of those perfectly impossible things which hold interest and offer a laugh a minute if one is in the proper mood. Adolph Menjou takes top honors as comedian, with Charles Butterworth, Patsy Kelly and George E. Stone as runners-up. Carole Landis and John Hubbard furnish romance.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Amusing

Children, 8 to 12
No interest

SCATTERGOOD BAINES ♦ ♦

Guy Kibbee, Dink Trout, Carol Hughes, John Archer, Emma Dunn, Willie Best. Screen play by Michael L. Simmons and Edward T. Lowe from the stories by Clarence Budington Kelland. Direction by Christy Cabanne. Pyramid-RKO release.

This is a simple, friendly picture, reminiscent of another day in customs of living and business methods. One rather interesting sidelight is that business practices which were considered shrewd in *Scattergood's* time would not be held ethical in our day. However, *Scattergood Baines* comes as a wanderer to a small town, dispenses prosperity and justice, and is able to outwit the chisellers when they think he has grown old and soft. Guy Kibbee is amiable and lovable in the titular part, Willie Best excellent as *Hipp* and the rest of the cast suitable, although some of them are types rather than individuals.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Not very interesting

THE STRAWBERRY BLONDE ♦ ♦

James Cagney, Olivia de Havilland, Rita Hayworth, Alan Hale, Jack Carson, George Tobias, Una O'Connor, George Reeves, Lucile Fairbanks, Edward McNamara, Helen Lynd, Herbert Heywood. Screen play by Julius J. and Philip G. Epstein from a play "One Sunday Afternoon" by James Hagan. Musical director, Leo Forbstein. Direction by Raoul Walsh. Warner Bros.

The social pattern of the 90's seems peculiarly adaptable to comedy. Costumes are picturesque, the *mores* and inhibitions of the period stimulate mirth today; the songs create memories of the past for oldsters and amuse the young. And thus "The Strawberry Blonde," while not designed for depth or

great reality, is different and entertaining. Miss de Havilland gives the best performance, for she catches the spirit of the play most accurately. In spite of the absurdities, she gives her role ingratiating depth and sincerity. It is the story of *Biff Grimes*, whose ambition to become a dentist is handicapped by poverty and by the irresponsible behavior of his father. Attracted by a lovely siren, he is made the tool of a friend, his rival, who throughout life uses *Biff's* simplicity and honesty for his own nefarious purposes. In the end *Biff* discovers that he has won life's battles; his friend has received the punishment he deserves without outside assistance. The cast is admirably chosen, the sets are interesting, and although the pace is slow, underneath the buffoonery there is a thread of purposeful philosophy to create interest in the unfoldment of the romantic interest.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
If interested

Children, 8 to 12
Little interest

TOBACCO ROAD ♦ ♦

Charley Grapwin, Elizabeth Patterson, Marjorie Rambeau, Gene Turney, William Tracy, Dana Andrews, Slim Summerville, Ward Bond, Grant Mitchell. Screen play by Nunnally Johnson, adapted from the stage play by Jack Kirkland, based on novel by Erskine Caldwell. Director of photography, Arthur Miller, A.S.C. Art direction, Richard Day and James Basevi. Direction by John Ford. 20th Century-Fox.

The film version of "Tobacco Road" lacks the virility, vitality and bawdy humor of the stage play which was a study of a degenerate family. The characters are no less pathetic, but their emotions are modified to suit the cinema mould. The film is an excellent character study of shiftless, irresponsible people who have lost all incentive and for whom there is little hope of help. But whether it is an accurate picture of social conditions or simply a tragic study of incapable people is a matter of personal opinion and prejudice. The story concerns the few remaining members of a Southern family of share croppers left on a deserted estate, living from hand to mouth in idleness, filth, and squalor. They are to be ejected from the property. A last minute reprieve is insufficient to give promise of any lasting economic safety for them because of their shiftlessness. It is a gloomy picture, but interesting because of the striking characterizations by Charley Grapwin and Elizabeth Patterson. Grapwin is *Jeeter*, ignorant, lazy, thieving, and childish. Elizabeth Patterson is the wife *Ada*, resigned, drab, hopeless, a woman who has "borned seventeen, or is it eighteen, children," buried five, and lost others who have gone into the world and forgotten her. The others are less realistic and seem more distorted for startling and amusing contrast. The settings are grim. The dirt, the dilapidated houses,

the filthy utensils of living set a sordid atmosphere lightened only by the lonely beauty of the country side as *Jeeter* and *Ada* tread their way toward the poor farm. Those who see the film will view an entirely different version from the stage production, which because of intense reality held a peculiar fascination for theatre goers. The film is more sentimental than the play, but considering the original material from which it is adapted, it is uniquely interesting in writing and direction.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No



TRAIL OF THE SILVER SPURS ◇ ◇

Ray "Crash" Corrigan, John "Dusty" King, Max "Alibi" Terhune, I. Stanford Jolley, Dorothy Short, Milt Morante, George Chesebro, Eddie Dean. Original story by Elmer Snell, adapted by Earle Snell. Direction by S. Roy Luby. A Range Buster Production. Monogram.

Here is another "Range Buster" production, a typical American Western and a good one. The setting is a ghost town, the center of a once prosperous gold mining district. Into "Bottle Neck" ride the *Range Busters*, government men following the trail of *Jingler*, a mysterious and sinister character suspected of having participated in a robbery of the Denver Mint. In the deserted town they find an old, half-demented prospector and his lovely daughter, and when *Jingler* also appears the pace is fast and furious. Mysterious panels, weird noises, ghostly figures enhance the suspense. One of the *Rangers* salts the mine, thinking only to ease the old man's mind, but news of a strike starts a stampede of prospectors who turn on the *Rangers* when the true story leaks out. However, it all ends happily. The action is entertaining, comedy is contributed by Elmer, a rival of Charlie McCarthy, and the cowboy music, characteristic of this series, as usual, adds to the charm of the picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good Western

Children, 8 to 12
Good action film



THE TRIAL OF MARY DUGAN ◇ ◇

Robert Young, Laraine Day, Tom Conway, Frieda Inescort, John Litel, Marsha Hunt, Marjoria Main, Henry O'Neill, Sara Haden, Francis Pierlot, Adison Richards, Pierre Watkin. Based on the play by Bayard Veiller. Direction by Norman Z. McLeod. Produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

"The Trial of Mary Dugan" in its current

film version is an extremely well-acted and absorbingly interesting court room drama, but its method of presentation differs from that of the stage play in that the story is elaborated to include a good deal of *Mary's* early life, and thus it places more emphasis on the human interest angle than did the stage version. It is the story of a young girl whose reform school past comes to light at her trial for the murder of her employer and forms an important link in the chain of circumstantial evidence pointing to her guilt. How she is proven innocent and the guilt placed on the murderer is cleverly brought out in a tense and exciting trial scene. The young lawyer who conducts her defense is a fellow employee, and the romance between the two is charmingly told in earlier sequences. Laraine Day as *Mary* displays poise and charm and dramatic ability that should insure her further success on the screen.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Presents adult theme

Children, 8 to 12
No

SHORT SUBJECTS



THE HAPPIEST MAN ON EARTH ◇ ◇

Complete credits are unavailable, but this seems to be the dramatization of an O. Henry story in which a man begs employment in a dangerous job because for his family's sake he would rather sacrifice his life than be unemployed. It is well acted but extremely depressing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Depressing

Children, 8 to 12
No



RESPECT THE LAW ◇ ◇

An informative picture showing the dire results that may occur when people disregard the law. In this instance a bubonic plague epidemic started when officials of a company failed to report the presence of rats in a building.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Interesting

Children, 8 to 12
Too alarming

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FEATURE FILMS

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That Hamilton Woman!
That Night in Rio
That Uncertain Feeling
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FEATURE FILMS

THE BAD MAN ♦ ♦

Wallace Beery, Lionel Barrymore, Laraine Day, Ronald Reagan, Henry Travers, Chris-Pin Martin, Tom Conway. Based on the play by Porter Emerson Browne. Screen play by Wells Root. Direction by Richard Thorpe. M.-G.-M.

This is the same play (filmed for the second time) which first appeared on the stage some twenty years ago with Holbrook Blinn in the title role. It may be because the dialogue has been cut and ineptly redrafted or because Wallace Beery has not the same quality of irresponsible charm which the former *Bad Man* possessed, or simply because the public taste has changed that the present version does not attain "hit" proportions. It is the same melodrama with a humorous turn concerning the bandit who by reason of a sudden change of heart cancels the mortgage on a cattle ranch and straightens out tangled love affairs by fair means and foul, chiefly foul. As usual Wallace Beery gives a memorable performance, and Lionel Barrymore is effective, although the part he takes is disagree-

able and crude. The film is done in sepia with some scenes of outstanding beauty, such as the spreading out of the great cattle herds over the desert. While a contrast is drawn between corrupt, underhanded methods of so-called business men and the open law-breaking of a "bad man" who uses his power for good ends, neither side emerges with great credit.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
 No; wrong values

Children, 8 to 12
 No

BLONDE INSPIRATION ♦ ♦

John Shelton, Virginia Grey, Albert Dekker, Charles Butterworth, Donald Meek, Reginald Owen, Alma Kruger, Rita Qigley, Marion Martin, George Lessey. Direction by Busby Berkeley. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

The only inspiration this picture has is the word in its title. It is a sad example of the wasted efforts of a good cast. A young writer with the help of a girl succeeds in finding a publisher who will give him a chance. The ramifications of the plot are tiresome.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
 No

Children, 8 to 12
 No

BORDER VIGILANTES ◇ ◇

William Boyd, Russell Hayden, Andy Clyde, Frances Gifford, Victor Jory, Ethel Wales, Morris Ankrum. Based on characters created by O. Henry. Direction by Derwin Abrahams. Harry Sherman-Paramount.

These three heroes of the saga, *Hopalong Lucky* and *California*, are justly popular with western fans. Each new picture finds them cleaning up a wicked gang, setting frontier life to rights. Here desperados have wormed themselves into trusted positions with the Vigilantes and operate with impunity until *Hopalong's* strategy brings them out in their true colors. On the whole, the story is below par for the series; some scenes are hackneyed and other ludicrously naive. But the riding is splendid as usual; there are fine views of rugged foothill country, and Morris Ankrum and Victor Jory give strong individual performances in place of the usual "good" and "bad" men of the supporting cast.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting

DEAD MEN TELL ◇ ◇

Sidney Toler, Sheila Ryan, Robert Weldon, Sen Yung, Don Douglas, Katherine Aldridge, Paul McGrath, George Reeves, Truman Bradley, Ethel Griffies, Lenita Lane, Milton Parsons. Based on the character created by Earl Derr Biggers. Original screen play by John Larkin. Photography by Charles Clarke. Direction by Harry Lachman. 20-Century-Fox.

This *Charlie Chan* picture ranks above most of the series because of its strong flavor of the sea front and its excellent photography. Masts and shrouds against a dark sky in beautiful composition, lone figures emerging out of the fog, lights from port holes reflected on the black waters below, all combine to give an unusual atmosphere of adventure and suspense. The plot is about average for the type. The action takes place during the passage of one night on and about a ship destined for a treasure hunt in the Cocos Islands and under the supervision of an astonishing old lady, granddaughter of a pirate. One by one each of a colorful and very unusual group of passengers is suspected of two crimes, and the mystery is eventually solved by *Charlie Chan* in spite of the well-intentioned hindrances of his second son, *Jimmy Chan*.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes, good

Children, 8 to 12
Too tense and confusing

BREAK THE NEWS ◇ ◇

Maurice Chevalier, Jack Buchanan, June Knight, Marta Labarr, Gertrude Mosgrove, Garry Marsh, Wallace Douglas, Joss Ambler, Robb Wilton. Screen play by Geoffrey Kerr. Original story by Loic Le Gouaillard. Produced and directed by Rene Clair. Music and Lyrics by Cole Porter. English production. Monogram.

Two actors, on having their routine cut

from a new revue, decide to follow the policy of the producer-star, and stage a publicity stunt which will shock the public into recognizing them. Unfortunately the stunt backfires and both almost pay life penalties in the confusion.

The play is an amusing trifle which is particularly noteworthy because it brings Maurice Chevalier and Jack Buchanan back before American audiences. It is clean and wholesome fun, although it does not show off the talents of either star to the best advantage, because they neither sing nor dance as much as usual, and Cole Porter's score is not his best. Rene Clair's direction is polished, however, and the bit characterizations stand out with unique clarity. New faces and clever business make them very entertaining. The settings are London, the Riviera, and a mythical Balkan kingdom, where the most entertaining action takes place when *Teddy Enton* (Jack Buchanan) is mistaken for the leader of the Revolutionary party. The film is unique and it should fill a pleasant interlude on any program.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

CITIZEN KANE ◇ ◇

A Mercury Production by Orson Welles. Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Everett Sloane, Ray Collins, George Coulouris, Agnes Morehead, Paul Stewart, Ruth Warrick, Erskine Sanford, William Alland, Fortunio Bonanova, Gus Schilling, Philip Van Zandt, Georgia Backus, Harry Shannon, Sonny Bupp, Buddy Swan, Orson Welles. Orson Welles. Direction-Production, Gregg Toland, A.S.C., Photography. Original Screen Play by Herman J. Mankiewicz and Orson Welles. R.K.O. Radio Pictures.

This is the life story of an egoist, a man with unlimited money and opportunity who died in lonely grandeur because, as his most intimate associate said of him, although he wanted everyone to love him he was incapable of loving anyone but himself. In the broader sense, he may be called a symbolic figure standing for paternalism as opposed to the exercise of free will of the individual, for under the guise of benevolence he uses his money and his influence to bestow upon others not what they may desire, but what he desires them to receive, and when they turn against him he is astonished at their ingratitude. The film begins with *Kane's* death. Then is shown a news reel assembling the high lights of his spectacular career. The editors of the news reel, however, are dissatisfied with their product and assign a reporter to the task of discovering the meaning of the last word spoken by *Kane* before his death, "Rosebud." As the reporter searches old records and interviews *Kane's* associates the whole of *Kane's* life story is reviewed on the

screen, sometimes confusingly, because it is told just as the reporter learns it without regard to chronology. Only in the last few feet of film is the significance of "Rosebud" revealed, and then one must watch carefully. To the analytical the disclosure offers interesting possibilities for speculation as to whether it is meant as a key to the explanation of *Kane's* maladjusted life or just a piquant surprise contrived by the authors to startle the audience. The film is vital, immensely interesting, intelligent entertainment departing radically in technique and content from movie tradition. Gregg Toland's photography alone would make it worthwhile.

The remarkably fine cast is unknown to the general public and as in many foreign made pictures, the film seems all the more lifelike on that account.

Orson Welles' interpretation of *Kane* is a masterpiece of acting. Joseph Cotten as *Jedediah Leland*, *Kane's* Jewish business manager, and Ray Collins, who plays the dramatic critic on *Kane's* newspaper and his closest friend, are exceptional. The settings of the castle built by *Kane* as an expression of his ego are breathtaking in their ironical exaggeration.

No more stunning production than this one has yet been made.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Interesting though
mature

Children, 8 to 12
Completely beyond
their understanding

THE DEVIL AND MISS JONES

Jean Arthur, Robert Cummings, Charles Coburn, Edmund Gwenn, Spring Byington, S. Z. Sakall, William Demarest, Florence Bates, Walter Kingsford, Montague Love, Richard Carle, Edward McNamara, Regis Toomey, Ilene Brewer. Written by Norman Krasna. Directed by Sam Wood. Produced by Frank Ross. R.K.O.

There is only one question about this lively comedy, and that is whether there may be those who will cavil about the labor vs. capital theme and the strike which climaxes the action—strikes being what they are today in public estimation. But no one can possibly deny that it is one of the funniest comedies of the season and very clever. The film opens with a note to say that the play is entirely "made up out of our heads" refers to "nobody" and adds

"P. S. Nobody sue
P. P. S. Please."

Thus the mood is set to introduce the richest man in the world who does not even know that he owns a certain department store until his employees hang him in effigy. He then recognizes that he is their "devil," and by a circuitous route becomes a confidential employee in order to discover the names of the trouble makers. *Miss Jones*, from "Children's Shoes" takes him kindly in tow, and his ex-

periences are hilariously funny as he begins to get an education which clears up certain impressions he has had. Miss Arthur and Charles Coburn make a wonderful team. It is almost Mr. Coburn's picture, for he is on the screen continuously in ridiculous situations before his identity is known. Spring Byington is charming in her role of sales-lady and Robert Cummings is perfectly cast as the fiery agitator. Some of the scenes are very clever: the Sunday at Coney Island; one in the shoe department where the "devil" tries to sell out-moded shoes to a little girl. But there are others too numerous to mention. Due to script, smooth direction and an exceptionally able cast, it never lets down its amusing pace.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Amusing

Children, 8 to 12
No objection

FOOTSTEPS IN THE DARK

Errol Flynn, Brenda Marshall, Ralph Bellamy, Alan Hale, Lee Patrick, Allen Jenkins, Lucille Watson, William Frawley, Roscoe Karns, Grant Mitchell, Maris Wrixon, Noel Madison, Jack La Rue, Turhan Bey. Direction Lloyd Bacon. Warner Bros.

A fast paced, well-written story, clever dialogue, and an excellent cast make "Footsteps in the Dark" an exceptionally entertaining comic murder mystery. A business man, who secretly writes popular detective yarns, gets himself into hot water with his family when his amateur sleuthing entangles him with a woman crook and a ring of jewel smugglers. Errol Flynn and Brenda Marshall as the husband and wife make expert use of the comedy situations.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining for over 14

Children, 8 to 12
No

A GIRL, A GUY AND A GOB

George Murphy, Lucille Ball, Edmond O'Brien, Henry Travers, Franklin Pangborn, George Cleveland, Kathleen Howard, Marguerite Chapman, Lloyd Corrigan, Mady Correll. Screen play by Frank Ryan and Bert Granet. Story by Grover Jones. Direction by Richard Wallace. Musical score Roy Webb. R.K.O.

The Harold Lloyd touch is distinctly discernible in this boisterous comedy, though one misses his actual presence. The rapidity of the absurd happenings, the excitement that goes from not knowing what may crop up next, the small gags that embroider the funny situations, all have the familiar breathless quality of Lloyd pictures. The title gives a sketchy idea of the plot, but the fun is contributed largely by the *Girl's* amazingly peculiar family and the *Gob's* ridiculous sailor friends. The *Guy* is a rich young man who is the *Gob's* rival for the hand of the *Girl*. All in all, this is an effective blues-chaser.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Perhaps

THE GREAT LIE ◇ ◇

Bette Davis, Mary Astor, George Brent, Lucille Watson, Hattie McDaniel, Grant Mitchell, Jerome Cowan, J. Farrell Macdonald, Sam McDaniel. Screen play by Leonore Coffee from a novel, "Far Horizon," by Polan Banks. Director of photography, Tony Gaudio, A.S.C. Music by Max Steiner. Direction by Edmund Goulding. Warner Bros.

Bette Davis and Mary Astor share honors for notable characterizations in this domestic triangle in which two women strive to hold the man they both love. George Brent is also excellent, but the film is an emotional drama about women and will probably have most appeal for women. The man, a wealthy playboy, marries a professional pianist while on a gay party. Finding soon that their marriage is illegal, he offers to re-wed her although he has already discovered that it has been a tragic mistake. The woman, however, places her concert engagements first. He then turns to the girl he really loves and they are married. Shortly after, on a Government airplane flight over South America, he is reported lost. The wife learns that the pianist is to have a child and she bargains for it. When her husband returns after many months in the jungle, the difficulty between the two women comes to a head with the child as pawn.

The play is magnificently acted. Both actresses individualize their roles, making the adult problem deeply emotional. The desert interlude is particularly fine. Miss Astor gives an amazing picture of an hysterical, bored woman whose desire for self indulgence is held down by the girl whose only thought is for the welfare of the child about to be born. Bette Davis sacrifices glamor to give a stunning portrait of a simple, natural, and devoted girl. Others in the cast give admirable support. The picture is smoothly directed and is in good taste. Max Steiner adds a fine musical score.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Very mature, not recommended

Children, 8 to 12

Unsuitable

I WANTED WINGS ◇ ◇

Ray Milland, William Holden, Wayne Morris, Brian Donlevy, Constance Moore, Veronica Lake, Harry Davenport, Phil Brown, Edward Fielding, Willard Robertson, Richard Lane, Addison Richards, Hobart Cavanaugh, Douglas Aylesworth, John Trent, Archie Twitchell, Richard Webb, John Heistand. Screen play, Richard Maibaum, Lieut. Beirne Lay, Jr., and Sig. Herzig. Based on a story by Eleanor Griffin and Comm. Frank Wead. From the book, "I Wanted Wings," by Beirne Lay, Jr. Direction by Mitchell Leisen. Paramount.

To want wings is one thing, but to get them is a different matter. The book, "I Wanted Wings" by Lieutenant Beirne Lay, Jr., is an absorbingly interesting account of what it takes to become an army flier, and the film, based on the book, has the added

interest of showing us at first hand some of what actually goes on at the cadet schools where young men are either made into fliers or sent away heart-broken because they lack the necessary qualifications. The picture was made with the cooperation and assistance of the United States Army Aviation Corps and gives us an inspiring idea of the months of training, the fortitude, the discipline, and the skill required of these young men, and of the infinite insight and ability of their instructors. The pictures of planes in flight and the practice blackout are some of the most thrillingly beautiful that have been shown on the screen. The kind of story which is woven through the film is becoming all too familiar to movie audiences especially in this type of production: the Lawrenceville-Yale graduate who is arrogant, unsportsmanlike, and even cowardly until he is exposed to the wholesome companionship of a less privileged youth; his sordid entanglement with a night club singer; and a melodramatic sequence when the woman stows away on a bomber and is killed in a crack-up. To the credit of the story writers let it be said that the affair is not glamorized.

The parts are splendidly cast, especially that of the mechanic whose ambition to win his wings is based on his psychological need to overcome an inferiority complex, and that of Brian Donlevy as the fine, understanding instructor. The rich-boy part played by Ray Milland is routine, but he does it well.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Interesting

Children, 8 to 12

No

MEET JOHN DOE ◇ ◇

Gary Cooper, Barbara Stanwyck, Edward Arnold, Walter Brennan, Spring Byington, J. Farrell Macdonald, James Gleason, Rod LaRoque, Irving Bacon, Regis Toomey, Warren Hymer. Screen play by Robert Riskin. Based on a story by Richard Connell and Robert Prentiss. Direction by Frank Capra. Warner Bros.

There is nothing new about the thought that if everyone practiced the admonition "Love Thy Neighbor," the world would be infinitely better, and in setting forth this idea "Meet John Doe" is not unique. However, it does present the theme in a new way. Its originality lies in the ironic conception that an idealistic crusade should be begun by a paper which is backed by a politician with Fascist aspirations, that it should be popularized over the radio by a hired imposter, and that it should collapse only when the naive hiring realizes how he is being used to betray his followers, refuses to deliver his ready-made speech and is exposed by the politician as a fake.

It is an interesting story, cleverly worked out as to details, and it reaches a terrific climax, but strangely enough its failure to

prove the practicability of its Utopian ideal comes as a disappointment and the ending seems rather trite. The direction, particularly the handling of the crowds, is Capra at his best. Gary Cooper is excellent in the role of "*Long John*" Willoughby, the baseball pitcher who is persuaded to impersonate "*John Doe*" because he so perfectly typifies what the public is supposed to believe is the average American.

Edward Arnold is in his element as Norton, the slick political boss, and Barbara Stanwyck does a pleasing job as the girl columnist responsible for the hoax, who writes the speeches to be delivered by "*John Doe*" and falls in love with him. Also entitled to particular notice is James Gleason for the scenes in which he warns "*John Doe*" of Norton's intentions.

* We are reliably informed that since its release the ending of this picture has been changed in such a way that it is improved greatly from our point of view.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Interesting though
mature in theme

Children, 8 to 12
No interest and
exhausting



THE LADY FROM CHEYENNE ◆ ◆

Loretta Young, Robert Preston, Edward Arnold, Gladys George, Frank Craven, Jessie Ralph, Willie Best. Screen play by Warren Duff and Kathryn Scola. Based on an original story by Jonathan Finn and Theresa Oaks. Produced and directed by Frank Lloyd. Universal Pictures.

Frank Lloyd presents a diverting novelty which amusingly burlesques political lobbying. Although the story is set in pioneer days—to be exact, Wyoming, 1870—the Western setting and the usual "bad men" controlling the new town are only a hackneyed background for the satirical fun which begins when Loretta Young, as a naive but surprisingly adroit young woman, learns her way around Cheyenne and maneuvers a vote for woman's suffrage from an astonished and unwilling legislature. Shortly thereafter, back in *Laramie*, a jury composed exclusively of women, speedily convicts the evil-doers, and honest government presumably prevails.

The film is uneven in interest, but after *Annie* reaches the Capitol the fun begins. She is aided and abetted by some very rough and colorful dance-hall girls who know only too well how to work on the foibles of the lawmakers, and also by *George*, a politically-wise hat-check boy. The union of the forces of the several types of women is an es-

pecially ironical touch. Loretta Young is at her best in these scenes, and amusing portrayals are given by Gladys George as the dance-hall Queen, Jessie Ralph as a strong minded pioneer woman, and Willie Best as *George*. The other roles are more stereotyped.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12
No



A MAN BETRAYED ◆ ◆

John Wayne, Frances Dee, Edward Ellis, Wallace Ford, Ward Bond, Harold Huber, Alexander Granach, Barnett Parker. Original story by Jack Moffitt, adapted by Tom Kilpatrick. Direction by John H. Auer. Republic Pictures.

A young lawyer, not believing the report that his college friend's death in a gambling house was suicide, begins an investigation which breaks up a criminal political machine. The natural and unaffected acting of John Wayne gives interest to this film. He has good lines which correspond with the small-town, honest, shrewd role he plays, and he stands out as unusual among the other, stereotyped characters. Frances Dee is the charming daughter of the boss politician, and her influence, thrown on the side of law and order, convinces her father to reform—after his crimes catch up with him. The writing seems at fault for introducing too many unimportant characters and too much business unconnected with the plot. The title is an engima also.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable



THE MAN WHO LOST HIMSELF ◆ ◆

Brian Aherne, Kay Francis, Henry Stephenson, S. Z. Sakall, Nils Asther, Sig Ruman, Dorothy Tree, Janet Beecher, Marc Lawrence, Henry Kolker. Screen play by Eddie Moran, based on a novel by H. DeVere Stackpole. Direction by Edward Ludwig. Produced by Lawrence W. Fox, Jr. Universal.

The "Masquerader" theme wherein the erring husband is replaced by a noble stranger who resembles him, is re-done with modern touches of comedy. Taxing credulity, the film goes the whole way and becomes farcical. *Malcolm Scott* escapes from an institution and runs into *John Evans* who is on his first convivial spree trying to forget an untrustworthy partner. *Scott* recognizing the likeness to himself, takes *Evans* home and leaves him there inebriated. *Evans*, learning that *Scott* has been killed in the night, decides to carry on the hoax temporarily, and the situation becomes so complicated that the audience is relieved when *Evans* finds himself in a straight-jacket.

Brian Aherne has adapted himself to this type of role recently with great success. He romps through desperate and risqué situations, seems actuated by the whims of the

moment through the entire film, and apparently has a hugely enjoyable time of it. Though the picture does not have novelty of plot and is handicapped thereby, it does benefit by Mr. Aherne's engaging personality, the warmth and beauty of Miss Francis, beautiful settings and clothes, and the able support of S. Z. Sakall, Henry Stephenson and minor characters. On the whole it is a very silly farce and definitely not for children.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

MEN OF BOY'S TOWN ♦ ♦

Spencer Tracy, Mickey Rooney, Bobs Watson, Larry Nunn, Darryl Hickman, Henry O'Neill, Mary Nash, Lee J. Cobb, Sidney Miller. Original screen play by James Kevin McGuinness. Direction by Norman Taurog. M.-G.-M.

The story of Boy's Town and the work of Father Flanagan in making good citizens out of wayward and unfortunate boys is known to many people, but it is not amiss to have another film to remind us that the need is still great and that the field might well be extended. Spencer Tracy has identified himself so closely with the character of Father Flanagan that one feels that one knows the man himself with all his foresight and understanding and his faith that there is good in every boy. Mickey Rooney takes the part of *Whitey*, mayor of the town and one of the most responsible boys. Various things happen in the space of a few months: the Father himself is up to his ears in financial difficulties; a badly crippled boy who has killed a reform school guard in revenge is paroled to him; *Whitey* is adopted by a wealthy couple and gets into serious trouble in trying to reform a very youthful bandit. Albeit the facts in the last case may have been drawn from life, the sight of a cherub-faced child of seven holding up a gas station and talking in adult criminal lingo is distasteful and absurd. The various parts are well taken, and the production is interesting and worth while though sometimes almost too tearful.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Some scenes too
too painful

THE PENALTY ♦ ♦

Edward Arnold, Lionel Barrymore, Marsha Hunt, Robert Sterling, Gene Reynolds, Emma Dunn, Veda Ann Bora, Richard Lane, Gloria De Haven, Grant Mitchell. Screen play by Harry Ruskin and John C. Higgins from play by Martin Berkeley. Direction by Harold S. Bucquet. M.-G.-M.

This is a melodramatic tale of crime and regeneration based on the theory that environment is the basic factor in character development. It is presented with somewhat too much emphasis on the bad influences which surround a youth in the earlier years.

These scenes are exciting but sordid.

A brutal, ruthless gunman trains his son as his accomplice in crime. While he is in hiding after a big robbery, the son is arrested and then paroled to kindly people in a rural district. The benefit of this association is shown when the boy sacrifices his father when he must choose between following him or protecting his new friends. As tense melodrama it is well enough done to interest, but it is otherwise not important.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No value; overem-
phasis on crime

Children, 8 to 12
No

POT O' GOLD ♦ ♦

James Stewart, Paulette Goddard, Horace Heidt and his Musical Knights, Charles Winninger, Mary Gordon, Frank Melton, Jed Prouty, Dick Hogan, James Burke, Charlie Arnt. A George Marshall production. Released through United Artists by James Roosevelt.

Light hearted nonsense and reliable hokum freely intermingled with equal quantities of A. S. C. A. P. and B. M. I. tunes, and ably put across by such favorites as Jimmie Stewart, Charles Winninger and Horace Heidt and his Musical Knights should make "Pot o' Gold" unusually popular. Jimmie Stewart has a made-to-order role as *Jimmie Haskell*, happy-go-lucky nephew of a rich manufacturer of health foods. He is perfectly contented to be the proprietor of a small-town music store and prefers to "fail successfully" year after year rather than to accept his uncle's offer of employment. But when his shop is confiscated by the sheriff he goes to the city and becomes involved anonymously in a feud between his uncle and the spunky *McCorkle* Clan whose boarding house is head quarters for an orchestra. That he will fall in love with *Molly McCorkle* and somehow manage to end the feud and get a lucrative engagement for the orchestra is obvious from the beginning, but there are lots of really funny incidents and unexpected situations leading up to the orchestra's triumphant appearance on *Uncle Charlie's* "Pot o' Gold" radio program. Almost everyone in the picture either sings or plays an instrument. Even Jimmie Stewart blows a mean harmonica and adds his baritone to many a barber shop chord. The picture is especially recommended to the tired school child and to all who like something decent, carefree and propagandless.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

POWER DIVE ♦ ♦

Richard Arlen, Jean Parker, Helen Mack, Roger Pryor, Don Castle, Cliff Edwards, Billy Lee, Thomas Ross, Louis Jean Heydt. Screen play by Maxwell Shane and Edward Churchill. Based on a story by Paul Franklin. Direction by James Hogan. Paramount.

The well-worn theme of brother pitted

against brother, in love as well as in work, is never very inspiring, and here it is particularly unpleasant. *Brad Farrell* (Richard Arlen) refuses to allow his kid brother (Don Castle) to follow his profession, which is to test new planes. The resulting antagonism persists throughout all their relationships and inspires the kid to do some pretty nasty things. The final scene of the testing of a new plastic plane designed by a blind man is a thrilling climax but scarcely worth waiting through the rest of the footage to see.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Children, 8 to 12
No

Not recommended



REACHING FOR THE SUN ♦ ♦

Joel McCrea, Ellen Drew, Eddie Bracken, Albert Dekker, Billy Gilbert, Bodil Ann Rosing, James Burke, Charles D. Brown, Regis Toomey. Screen play by W. L. River. Based on story by Wessel Smitter. Musical score by Victor Young. Photography by William C. Mellor, A.S.C. Produced and directed by William A. Wellman. Paramount.

The belief that a man has a right to "reach for the sun," to live the life for which he is best suited so long as it does not conflict with his fellow man's, is a good one, and thus the theme of this picture will appeal to many. It is a sociological problem, and an important one but the treatment cannot be recommended wholeheartedly. A clam digger from the wooded lakes of Michigan goes to Detroit into the automobile industry, where he hopes to save enough money to buy an outboard motor for his boat. Then the inevitable happens. He marries, his wife has a baby, and he seems tied for life to the mechanical routine of his job. His wife is a pretty, sharp tongued waitress and a dime-a-dance girl at night. After their marriage she is bitterly resentful of changing from a security of sorts to a life she does not understand. The plot carries the couple through the hard days of a lay-off, back again to the factory, to a separation and through a frightful accident before the way is clear for the little family.

The picture has interest. It is lightened by excellent comedy particularly due to the presence of Eddie Bracken whose performance is nicely shaded. Joel McCrea and Ellen Drew are good. A few scenes are not in the best of taste, the Maternity Center class for fathers is silly, and the fight in the factory with gigantic machines is terrifying. However it contrasts the ambitions of young moderns. It presents the problem of one who is temperamentally unfitted for the mechanical age and offers his own personal solution. In this it will win sympathy. And in its favor it may be said that there are no pink tinged agitators, no strike as climax, and for this may we be truly grateful.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Children, 8 to 12
No; too mature

Mature but of interest

ROAD TO ZANZIBAR ♦ ♦

Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour, Una Merkel, Eric Blore, Douglas Dumbrille, Iris Adrian, Lionel Royce, Buck Woods, Leigh Whipper, Ernest Whitman, Noble Johnson. Director, Victor Schertzinger. Musical director, Victor Young. Paramount.

"Road to Zanzibar" seems like a combination of radio broadcast, circus, and wild adventure tale with absurdly funny situations and lines that sound as though Bob Hope and Bing Crosby were having a wonderful time "ad libbing." The picture commences with *Chuck* and *Fearless* putting on a human cannon ball act at a carnival in Africa. They go from town to town mystifying the gullible public with fake stunts and trying to collect enough money to buy passage home. Later they take up with two adventuresses, buy a non-existent diamond mine, go on safari through the jungle and have all sorts of hair raising adventures with cannibals and wild animals. The picture is completely insane and lots of fun, although the music is disappointing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Might be frightening

THE ROUND UP ♦ ♦

Richard Dix, Preston Foster, Patricia Morrison, Don Wilson, Ruth Donnelly, Douglas Dumbrille, Jerome Cowan, Betty Brewer, Morris Ankrum, Richard Curtis. Screen play by Harold Shumate. Based on a story by Edmund Day. Direction by Lesley Selander. Paramount.

The Wild West of frontier days is the setting for this melodramatic thriller, but the plot departs from the traditional naivete of westerns. The villain is a more sympathetic character than the romantic lead and the heroine is not an unsophisticated ingenue. Married to one man she becomes involved with a former suitor, contracts a gambling debt and causes complications leading to murder. Included in the action are a terrific battle between the U. S. Cavalry and a band of Indians, trick riding, robbery and gun play, and Spanish dancing. In fact, the picture is too full of a number of things to be good as a whole, though parts of it are enjoyable.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Questionable

Children, 8 to 12
No

SCOTLAND YARD ♦ ♦

Nancy Kelly, Edmund Gwenn, John Loder, Henry Wilcoxon, Melville Cooper, Gilbert Emery, Norma Varden. Screen play by Samuel G. Engel and John Balderston from a play by Denison Clift. Directed by Norman Foster. Producer, Sol M. Wurtzel. 20th Century-Fox.

"Scotland Yard" has been brought up to date by giving it a setting in London of today. *Dakin Barrolles*, the bank robber wanted by Scotland Yard, hides in the army and later made into the image of *Sir John Lasher* by plastic surgery, returns to the city.

In taking *Sir John's* place in the bank, *Barrolles* is not above conniving to rob again, but when he finds that German agents are about to rob it too, his patriotism comes to the rescue. Identified as *Barrolles*, he finds that in the national emergency the Government has pardoned all former crooks.

While the story is far-fetched and the acting only average, it is none the less entertaining and the timely setting adds interest.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
If interested

THE SEA WOLF ◆ ◆

Edward G. Robinson, Ida Lupino, John Garfield, Alexander Knox, Gene Lockhart, Barry Fitzgerald, Stanley Ridges, David Bruce, Francis McDonald, Howard Da Silva, Frank Lackteen. Screen play by Robert Rossen. Adapted from a novel by Jack London. Photography by Sol Polito. Music by Erich Wolfgang Korngold. Direction by Michael Curtiz. Warner Bros.

Jack London's powerful story of violence at sea seems never to be dated. Hobart Bosworth made it one of the first feature length films and it has been filmed successfully several times in the years since. Today its theme is startlingly analogous to certain modern ideologies, for *Wolf Larson* is a Hitler in his own realm, an egomaniac who reads Milton in his quarters, and emerges to "reign in Hell" among his men, rather than "serve in Heaven." Only thus can he build up compensation for an inferiority complex. To him, "cruelty is strength—mercy is weakness," and the enforcement of this philosophy makes the *Ghost* a "Hell Ship" for the luckless crew. Two survivors of a collision are taken on board. One is a writer whose soft life has never brought him in contact with such brutal reality, and to him *Wolf*, in bursts of egoistic confidence, outlines the contrasting complexes which contribute to his make-up. In the end this one decent man is sacrificed, preferring death to compromise. The action is brutal, frightful and hopeless. No one survives except two human derelicts, fugitives from justice, and their future is debatable.

Direction and photography leave little to be desired. A superb musical score increases the emotional tension. The cast is splendid, and exceptionally fine bits are contributed by Gene Lockhart and Barry Fitzgerald. The magnificent power of Jack London's novel has been retained, but it is strong meat for all but the most hardy.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Only over 15 and if
they have read book

Children, 8 to 12
No; too brutal

THE SIGN OF THE WOLF ◆ ◆

Michael Whalen, Grace Bradley, Darryl Hickman, Louise Beavers, Wade Crosby, Tony Paton, Joseph Bernard, Ed Brady, Brandon Hurst, Eddie Kane, Smoky and

Shadow. Screen play by Elizabeth Hopkins and Edmond Kelso. Adapted from the story "That Spot," by Jack London. Direction by Howard Bretherton. Monogram Pictures.

Good dog stories have perennial interest, and in this, two magnificent Police Shepherds hold the center of the stage. *Smoky* and *Shadow* are returning from a dog show when the airplane piloted by their mistress is wrecked in the Northern woods. *Smoky* escapes but *Shadow* goes to get help and remains at the fox farm where his mistress is taken to recuperate. When valuable foxes are lost suspicion rests on the dog. The plot is logically and excitingly developed. While dialogue somewhat hampers the actors, the dogs are superbly natural and beautifully trained, and they create sustained interest throughout.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Good

SLEEPERS WEST ◆ ◆

Lloyd Nolan, Lynn Bari, Mary Beth Hughes, Louis Jean Heydt, Edward Brophy, Don Costello, Ben Carter, Don Douglas, Oscar O'Shea. Direction by Eugene Forde. 20th Century-Fox.

"Sleepers West," a speeding train plunging through the night, is the unusual setting for a detective story, and the atmosphere is cleverly built up by sound and photography. The plot is a new arrangement of an old theme in which a detective is smuggling a key-witness to San Francisco to give evidence which will clear an innocent man of a charge of murder. A number of people wish to prevent this, but the most annoying person is *Michael Shayne's* former fiancée, a newspaper writer, who almost succeeds in spoiling the plan because of her unfortunate desire to get a "story" at all cost.

It is fairly good entertainment, lively, smoothly directed, with subtle humor and a novel background.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Not recommended

THAT HAMILTON WOMAN! ◆ ◆

Vivien Leigh, Laurence Olivier, Alan Mowbray, Sara Allgood, Gladys Cooper, Henry Wilcoxon, Heather Angel, Halliwell Hobbes, Gilbert Mander, Ro'and Sinclair, Luis Albern. Original screen play by Walter Reisch and R. C. Sheriff. Direction by Alexander Korda. Producers, Alexander Korda.

"That Hamilton Woman!" appropriately so-called because the phrase reflects the light in which Lady Hamilton was viewed by her English contemporaries, in a lavish historical drama built around the love affair of Lord Nelson and the beautiful wife of England's Ambassador to Naples. According to the film, and also to history, Lady Hamilton's influence at the Court of Naples and her interest in Nelson were important factors in

shaping the events which led to England's participation in the Napoleonic wars. The film gives an accurate impression of the era and purposefully draws a parallel between the situation in England at that time and her present status as bulwark against a dictatorial aggressor. Vivien Leigh in costumes and poses copied from the familiar Romney portraits is exquisite. The photography is superlative, and many of the sets are magnificently beautiful, but nevertheless in some respects the film is disappointing. With all its beauty, it is often stodgy. Miss Leigh, except in appearance, seems miscast for so colorful a personality as Lady Hamilton, and Laurence Olivier's sombre characterization of Lord Nelson makes it difficult to understand how such a man could have become the idol of the British people. 'R

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Interesting

Children, 8 to 12

No interest

THAT NIGHT IN RIO

Alice Faye, Don Ameche, Carmen Miranda, S. Z. Sakall, J. Carroll Naish, Curt Bois, Leonid Kinskey, Frank Puglia, Lillian Porter, Carmen Miranda's Orchestra. Direction, Irving Cummings. Musical direction, Alfred Newman. 20th Century-Fox.

Here is a gay, risqué musical comedy, filmed in exquisite color, with elaborate sets and excellent musical numbers. It may be recognized by long-time film fans as a remake of "Folies Bergere" with Maurice Chevalier and Merle Oberon. The plot concerns the absurd complications which arise when an actor is paid to impersonate a certain baron and the hoax leads to some spicy lines and situations which may be broadly interpreted. The film is more than usually reminiscent of stage productions, for beautiful girls parade like manikins and well-staged dance routines are emphasized. Don Ameche plays the double role exceptionally well, Carmen Miranda is cast as a temperamental singer in love with the actor, and Alice Faye plays the baroness who finds her marital position embarrassingly complicated. Carmen Miranda is dynamic; she is gorgeously costumed and her rendition of the songs is unique and fascinating. Her orchestra also is an asset. S. Z. Sakall, Curt Bois and Leonid Kinskey play amusing roles.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12

No

THAT UNCERTAIN FEELING

Merle Oberon, Melvyn Douglas, Burgess Meredith, Alan Mobray, Olive Blakeley, Harry Davenport, Eve Arden, Sig Ruman, Richard Carle. Screen play by Donald Ogden Stewart. Adapted by Walter Reisch. Directed by Ernest Lubitsch. Sol Lesser Production. United Artists.

Ernest Lubitsch's directorial touches bring to life a very light and airy farce concerning domestic differences which almost terminate in the divorce court. A young wife married to an insurance agent visits a

psychiatrist to learn why she suffers from hiccups. In the doctor's office she encounters an erratic musician, and their acquaintance seems to annul her boredom. Her husband stalls off the divorce by the old remedy of jealousy, and by also proving the obvious fact that changing husbands is not a panacea.

Burgess Meredith's performance is brilliant as the temperamental "artist" who, although attracted by the lady's charms, is not above appreciating the material considerations of an alliance with her. Miss Oberon is decorative and Mr. Douglas has a role more suited to his talents than several recent ones. Eve Arden has several good scenes. But the most amusing scene is played by a group of Hungarian guests at a dinner party given for the purpose of getting an insurance policy. Sig Ruman and several unlisted characters carry this off hilariously. The film is gay but unimportant entertainment approval of which is largely a matter of taste. .Q

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12

Unsuitable

TOPPER RETURNS

Roland Young, Joan Blondell, Carole Landis, Billie Burke, Dennis O'Keefe, Patsy Kelly, H. B. Warner, Eddie (Rochester) Anderson, George Zucco, Donald MacBride. Original screen play by Jonathan Latimer based on fictional characters conceived by the late Thorne Smith. Additional dialogue by Paul Gerard Smith. Director of Photography, Norbert Brodine. Musical score by Werner Talbot. Direction by Roy Del Ruth. Hal Roach Production. United Artists.

The plot of this farce would be almost impossible to tell and it would not be so much fun for others if it were divulged. Suffice it to say that it is a "Who-dun-it?" mystery and the ghost of the corpse returns to discover how it happened and to help find the guilty party. *Topper* is again the only one who can see the lively spirit, and he is sincerely unhappy about getting mixed up in the affair. He doesn't like it at all, his wife (Billie Burke) doesn't like it, and Rochester, his chauffeur is so disturbed by the strange happenings that he threatens to go back with Jack Benny who at least does not consort with the supernatural. Sliding pannels, disappearing furniture, subterranean rivers and a trained seal add to the confusion, and the cast has an exciting time solving the mystery to the hilarious amusement of the spectators. It is very well directed and the photography adds many clever touches.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Very entertaining

Children, 8 to 12

Good if movie wise

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FEATURE FILMS

AFFECTIONATELY YOURS ♦ ♦

Merle Oberon, Dennis Morgan, Rita Hayworth, Ralph Bellamy, George Tobias, James Gleason, Hattie McDaniel, Jerome Cowan, Butterfly McQueen. Screen play by Edward Kaufman from story by Fanya Foss and Aleen Leslie. Direction by Lloyd Bacon. Warner-First National.

Here is screwball comedy, not at its best. A foreign correspondent in Lisbon who considers himself a roving Romeo, is shocked to learn that his wife in America has divorced him and is about to marry a serious minded pen point manufacturer. He flies home followed by his latest conquest to stop the wedding if possible. The usual absurdities follow. Everyone falls into the ocean a time or two and eventually by devious and unethical ways he proves to his wife that she still loves him. The cast struggles with a feeble script.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
 No

Children, 8 to 12
 No

THE BLACK CAT ♦ ♦

Basil Rathbone, Hugh Herbert, Brod Crawford, Bela Lugosi, Gale Sondergaard, Anne Gwynne, Gladys Cooper, Cecilia Loftus, Claire Dodd, John Eldredge, Alan Ladd. Suggested by Edgar Allan Poe's story. Original screen play by Robert Lees, Fred Rinaldo, Eric Taylor and Robert Neville. Direction by Albert S. Rogell. Universal.

Amid dark-toned, creepy surroundings the mystery develops in a vein so macabre that it will be disturbing to many people, nauseating to the squeamish. Even Hugh Herbert's fooleries and Brod Crawford's clumsy sleuthing fail to alleviate the prevailing gloom. The incentive for several murders is the money of a strange old lady with a houseful of cats and a greedy coterie of relatives and servants. *Old Abigail* is so attached to her pets that she has a private crematorium for those which die, and since it is large enough for a human being—you've guessed it—one of the avaricious heirs gets the idea of using it for that purpose. Basil Rathbone, Bela Lugosi and Gale Sondergaard are the most sinister in appearance in the cast, with Gladys Cooper a close fourth.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
 Unhealthy

Children, 8 to 12
 Impossible

THE COWBOY AND THE BLONDE ♦ ♦

Mary Beth Hughes, George Montgomery, Alan Mobraay, Robert Conway, John Miljan, Richard Lane, Robert Emmett, Minerva Urecal, George O'Hara, Monica Bannister, William Halligan. Screen play by Walter Bullock. Direction by Ray McCarey. 20th Century-Fox.

This is an amusing burlesque of studio life, more subtle than "Once in a Lifetime," and having very funny dialogue and absurd situations. A temperamental movie star keeps the studio in an uproar with her tantrums, and production is at a standstill. A new find, a champion bronco buster, is brought in by a talent scout and in "appropriate" style is tested as a man-about-town. The fiasco would normally have ended his career except that the star becomes interested in the personable young man and he is signed because of his soothing effect upon her behavior. When he discovers the unflattering truth, he departs, and a ruse is needed to reunite the two who are now in love with each other. It is all lightly entertaining, but the obvious relationship of the woman to her patron places it in the sophisticated class. **Adolescent, 12 to 16** **Children, 8 to 12**
Not especially recommended No

♦ ♦
FLAME OF NEW ORLEANS ♦ ♦

Marlene Dietrich, Bruce Cabot, Roland Young, Mischa Auer, Andy Devine, Frank Jenks, Eddie Quillan, Laura Hope Crews, Franklin Pangborn, Theresa Harris, Clarence Muse. Screen play by Norman Krasna. Photography by Rudy Mate, A.S.C. Set decorations by R. A. Gausman. Direction by Rene Clair. Produced by Joe Pasternak. Universal Pictures.

This is an extremely sophisticated trifle concerning a particularly wicked adventuress who, about a hundred years ago, came to New Orleans to fleece the rich men of that picturesque city. In the end she sacrifices financial security for a more romantic interlude. The utter absurdity of the plot will amuse sophisticates. The decor of the production and the photography are very beautiful, and M. Clair has, by clever direction of a capable cast, held interest in the flip-pant story and the frequently startling dialogue. It is in a class quite by itself and definitely not for children.

Adolescent, 12 to 16 **Children, 8 to 12**
No No

♦ ♦
THE GREAT AMERICAN BROADCAST ♦ ♦

Alice Faye, Jack Oakie, John Payne, Cesar Romero, James Newill, Mary Beth Hughes, Eula Morgan, William Pawley, Lucien Littlefield, the Four Ink Spots, the Nicholas Brothers, the Wierie Brothers. Directed by Archie Mayo. Associate Producer Kenneth Macgowan. Original screen play by Don Ettlinger, Edwin Blum, Robert Ellis and Helen Logan. Twentieth Century-Fox.

In spite of its rather unimaginative title,

this is neither one of the stereotyped films about radio entertainers nor an epic about the development of the radio. It is, however, an unusually amusing and enjoyable film built around the adventures of two young pioneers in the field of radio, and high lighted by the excellent specialty acts of the well-known entertainers whose names appear in the credits. Beginning in 1919, when to be able to talk by wireless from one room to another was considered miraculous, it tells how *Chuck Hadley* and *Rix Martin* developed the use of radio and finally startled the whole country by broadcasting the Willard-Dempsey fight and making sponsored radio programs available to the public. Jack Oakie creates a vivid and consistent character. He is both funny and pathetic as the uncouth but good hearted *Chuck* who furnishes the big ideas and whose sweetheart deserts him for *Rix*. John Payne as *Rix* has rather an unsympathetic role, and Cesar Romero as *Chadwick*, the rich playboy who puts up the money, is, as usual, expert in portraying the kind of person you love to see on the receiving end of a punch. The plot of the love triangle (or in this case rectangle) has the usual marital misunderstandings and the familiar smiling-through-tears finish to the strains of the theme song, but Alice Faye is good in her role and sings pleasantly.

While the film does not pretend to give an accurate history of the development of radio, it does give an interesting resume of the phases by which radio has grown to its present popularity.

Adolescent, 12 to 16 **Children, 8 to 12**
Yes Entertaining in spots, but not as a whole

♦ ♦
HER FIRST BEAU ♦ ♦

Jane Withers, Jackie Cooper, Edith Fellows, Josephine Hutchinson, William Tracy, Martha O'Driscoll, Edgar Buchanan, Jonathan Hale, Una O'Connor, Kenneth Howell, Addison Richards. Screen play by Gladys Lehman and Karen DeWolf from a story by Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements. Direction by Theodore Reed. B. B. Kahane production. Columbia Pictures.

This picture reflects youth and family life in our modern, streamlined age. It is a genuinely human story of the 'teen age, about youngsters who have to learn the lessons of life through their own mistakes, and about parents who are wise enough to realize this and give understanding help. Jane Withers is the adolescent who suddenly becomes conscious of boys and wants to "grow up" when a real heart-breaker comes to visit in her town. Her attempts at sophistication bring her ridicule, and disillusionment too, for *Kenneth* falls for another girl. The "boy across the street" yearns to fly and his per-

sistence is dangerously hazardous. However, it brings his father closer to him and his ambition is assured. There are a number of delightful and effervescent youngsters in the action, all engaged in the typical interests of today and speaking the dialect of their age, but the adults, Josephine Hutchinson, Una O'Connor, Jonathan Hale and Addison Richardson hold their own in competition. It is good fun for the family.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
If interested

I'LL WAIT FOR YOU ♦ ♦

Robert Sterling, Marsha Hunt, Virginia Weidler, Paul Kelly, Fay Holden, Henry Travers. Based on a story by Mauri Grashin. Screen play by Guy Prosper. Direction by Robert B. Sinclair. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

A week on a Connecticut farm with the "home folks," including a sweetly innocent school marm is adequate treatment to rehabilitate a hardened gangster and "lady-killer"—well, it might happen in real life, but it isn't very probable. The first scenes are laid in sophisticated night spots of New York which afford a contrast to the simple country-side reached by *Lucky Wilson* in his flight from the officers of the law. The picture is raised above mediocrity by a well-chosen cast. Marsha Hunt has a wistful sincerity; Virginia Weidler is the perennial hoyden, and Fay Holden and Henry Travers seem genuine farm people. At the beginning Robert Sterling has so much of the metallic slickness associated with racketeers that it is difficult to feel any sympathy with him, but this is overcome by development of the character as the action progresses. Restraint has been shown on the part of the director in merely referring to prison scenes and not parading them before the eyes.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
No

INVISIBLE GHOST ♦ ♦

Bela Lugosi, Polly Ann Young, John McGuire, Clarence Muse, Terry Walker, Betty Compton, Ernie Adams, George Pembroke, Jack Mulhall. Story and screen play by Helen and Al Martin. Direction by Joseph H. Lewis. Monogram Pictures.

When Bela Lugosi's name appears on a cast we are prepared for a "horror" film. Here he plays a pleasant, kindly appearing gentleman who lives with his charming daughter in a home where unexplained murders have been occurring. He is as sincerely concerned as are the police, but he will not follow their advice to move away because of a sentimental belief that his beloved wife, who left him some time before, will return one day. Almost at once the audience is let in on the secret that he is the murderer, unwittingly acting in a trance

when under strong and sudden emotional strain. It then becomes a matter of tense suspense as one by one victims fall and the others in the story awake to the situation. The direction is not inspired, but the plot is different and the thrills are moderate.

Adolescent, 12 to 16

Not recommended,
but not offensive

Children, 8 to 12

No

LAS VEGAS NIGHTS ♦ ♦

Constance Moore, Bert Wheeler, Phil Regan, Lillian Cornell, Virginia Dale, Hank Ladd, Betty Brewer, Henry Kolker, Francetta Malloy, Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Original screen play by Ernest Pagano and Harry Clark. Direction by Ralph Murphy. Musical direction by Victor Young. Paramount.

This is a dull picture about unpleasant people. The plot is concerned with three sisters, night club entertainers, who come to Las Vegas to collect a legacy, the opportunist lawyer who tries to outwit them, and the various hangers-on and patrons of gambling places. Even the music of Tommy Dorsey and his orchestra is not up to standard.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

MAJOR BARBARA ♦ ♦

Wendy Hiller, Rex Harrison, Robert Morley, Robert Newton, Emyln Williams, Sybil Thorndike, Deborah Kerr, David Tree, Penelope Dudley-Ward, Marie Lohr, Walter Hudd, Marie Ault. Screen play and dialogue by George Bernard Shaw, adapted from the play. Produced and directed by Gabriel Pascal. Released by United Artists.

Few authors stimulate controversial reactions as does Bernard Shaw. His sophisticated and sardonic wit appeals to certain audiences. It sometimes offends others, and any review of story content must of necessity be colored by individual prejudice. In "Major Barbara" Mr. Shaw says that he presents a parable. Since parables are seldom entertaining, be assured that this is comedy and in it his wit is at its best, also his clear and caustic appreciation of human nature. Each character is as real, as frail and as strong as life, but in the unfoldment of the plot the gradual awakening of spiritual values is apparent. It tells the story of a girl who seeks to find a way of service to God. She goes among the riff-raff, the under-fed, the evil-doers as a Salvation Army Miss. She finds ultimate service in her own station of life, not by ignoring the wealth at her command, but by using it to correct social evils.

The amazing characters come to life vividly before us. The girl (Wendy Hiller), antagonistic daughter of a munitions worker, is sincere yet inconsistent. She is devout, earnest, clever in her handling of the strangely assorted beings she wishes to bring to God.

She cannot countenance accepting money for the Army work from sources which also furnish the means for evils such as war. Her understanding comes when she sees that steel and explosives have uses other than destruction, that life must go on in the face of death, and that those who make munitions may have a social conscience too. The cast is a most unusual assembly of stars. *Barbara's* father is played with obvious enjoyment by Robert Morley. It is a fantastic role and Mr. Morley has a wild, mad gleam in his eye while he talks with his materialistic wife, his stupid son, and his recalcitrant daughter, which is perfect comedy. Rex Harrison is a professor of Greek who frankly joins the Army to be near *Barbara*. His capitulation to her father is a rare bit. Robert Newton's portrait of the belligerent cockney is a masterpiece. His bewilderment at his own reactions and his final solution for his life are marvelously well played. Sybil Thorndike, Emlyn Williams, and Marie Ault are impressive. The film was made under the terrific conditions in England today, and Mr. Shaw says that it is sent to America with "others of my old plays just as you are sending us your old destroyers," both to be devoted to the "abolition of slavery." He says, "When I grew up they told me that the Civil War in America had abolished black slavery, so that job having been done, I determined to devote my life to the abolition of white slavery. That is just as much in your interest as it is in my interest or that of England. I hope that you will have a hand in that abolition as you had in the last abolition."

The production is a rare blending of cinematic techniques. The musical score is excellent. In addition, it is remarkably entertaining.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Too mature

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable and no interest

MODEL WIFE ♦ ♦

Joan Blondell, Dick Powell, Charlie Ruggles, Lee Bowman, Lucile Watson, Ruth Donnelly, Billy Gilbert, John Qualen, Lorraine Krueger, Glen Turnbull. Screen play by Charles Kaufman, Horace Jackson and Grant Garrett, from an original by Leigh Jason. Produced and directed by Leigh Jason. Universal Pictures.

Although the wife in this domestic comedy is all that she should be, the husband gets pushed into the background until he gets drunk and asserts himself. This is the formula, and while there are amusing moments, one is left with a faint disgust about the whole thing. The two young people have to keep their marriage secret because of the business policy of the old martinet who owns the establishment in which both work. When

her son is put into the office and the wife is assigned as his private secretary, he falls in love with her, and the husband is relegated even further into obscurity. When the situation becomes unbearable he goes on a spree and tells off the boss. Dialogue is at times on the borderline and there are suggestive scenes. The cast is good, but Dick Powell has a very unsympathetic role. On the whole, the comedy does not jell.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

ONE NIGHT IN LISBON ♦ ♦

Fred MacMurray, Madeleine Carroll, Patricia Morison, Billie Burke, John Loder, Dame May Whitty, Edmund Gwenn, Reginald Denny, Billy Gilbert, Marcel Dalio, Bruce Wyndham, Jerry Mandy. Screen play by Virginia Van Upp, based on play by John Van Druten. Direction by Edward H. Griffith. Photography by Bert Glennon, A.S.C. Musical direction by Sigmund Krumgold. Paramount.

Surely the Hays office must have been relaxing when this production was planned, for it has more censorable lines and questionable situations than have been permitted in many moons. It has been elaborated and modernized from John Van Druten's stage play, "There's Always Juliet," at least the central idea of love at first sight is there. Briefly, in the film, an American aviator ferrying bombers to England and waiting for return passage, meets a charming, naive and well-born English girl in a bomb shelter. With brash enthusiasm he pursues her until she is willing to follow him on a romantic interlude for "one night in Lisbon." In Portugal the situation is enlivened by having the girl made the unwitting tool by means of whom a nest of German spies are captured.

Fortunately the picture is so fast moving and amusing that the sexiness is somewhat balanced. The up-to-date settings, the interesting atmosphere, the swift action, and the clever characterizations are entertaining. Madeleine Carroll presents a very believable and lovely heroine, caught in her first emotional upheaval. Edmund Gwenn is fine, as usual, in the role of a cunning diplomat who is not averse to using his friends for the benefit of England. John Loder and Billie Burke add immeasurably to the fun. Fred MacMurray is at first the sort of crude and boisterous American whom his countrymen usually feel inclined to shoot on sight, but he gradually wins sympathy up to the point where his ex-wife appears on the scene in Portugal. She is entirely unnecessary to the plot and introduces an unsavory doubt about the hero's moral stability. It is a most sophisticated comedy, spicy in dialogue and daring in treatment.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
No.

Children, 8 to 12
No

THE PEOPLE VS. DR. KILDARE ♦ ♦

Lew Ayres, Lionel Barrymore, Laraine Day, Bonita Granville, Alma Kruger, Paul Stanton, Red Skelton, Diana Lewis. Screen play by Willis Goldbeck and Harry Ruskin, based on original story by Lawrence P. Bachmann and Max Brand. Direction by Harold S. Bucquet. M-G-M.

Dr. Kildare must be protected by a lucky star, for he is consistently saved professionally after some daring procedure which is questioned from the standpoint of sound medical ethics. In this, he operates on a woman in the street after a traffic accident. While the patient's life is saved, paralysis follows and he is brought to trial for malpractice. Due to the casual testimony of a witness a new theory is advanced which proves that the paralysis is caused by a tumor. The grand old *Dr. Gillespie* then makes an eloquent plea for faith in doctors. But it is this faith in doctors which the series seems likely to undermine. The medical profession has rules for the protection of the public. Violation of these rules is debatable at least, and we are tempted to believe that only in melodramatic movies could *Dr. Kildare* save himself time after time. The series, too, rarely shows hospital attaches with any dignity. Humor depends upon flippant and silly dialogue. However, the general tone is entertaining and the cast undeniably adds interest to the productions.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
No

THE PIONEERS ♦ ♦

Tex Ritter, Arkansas "Slim" Andrews, Red Foley, Doye O'Dell, George Chesbro, Del Lawrence, Wanda McKay, Post Park, Karl Hackett, Lynton Brent. Screen play by Charles Anderson inspired by James Fenimore Cooper's novel. Directed by Al Herman. Edward Finney production. Monogram.

In this film adaptation of "The Pioneers," the constant Indian raids, the racing careening wagon trains, and the slaughter have so bogged down the plot that it is difficult to follow the story. Tex Ritter in the role of Texas Ranger unmasks the white outlaws who are rousing the Indians against the settlers. The attacks by Indians and outlaws are so numerous that there is no climax and the action becomes tiresome and confusing. One wonders that there are any survivors at the end. The musical interludes are pleasing although they seem incongruous under the circumstances.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
No value

Children, 8 to 12
No

RIDE ON, VAQUERO ♦ ♦

Cesar Romero, Mary Beth Hughes, Lynne Roberts, Chris-Pin Martin, Robert Lowery, Ben Carter, William Demarest, Robert Shaw, Edwin Maxwell. Original screen play by Samuel G. Engel, suggested by character "The Cisco Kid" created by O. Henry. Di-

rection by Herbert I. Leeds. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Another entertaining episode in the adventures of the outlaw pair, the *Cisco Kid* and his companion, *Gordito*. Although a price is set upon their heads for unethical acts, the *Kid* has his own standards and he plays "Robinhood" as usual to help a friend. Plenty of action and colorful backgrounds add interest.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Very entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Ethics may confuse

ROAR OF THE PRESS ♦ ♦

Jean Parker, Wallace Ford, Jed Prouty, Suzanne Kaaren, Harlan Tucker, Evalyn Knapp, Robert Frazer, Dorothy Lee. Screen play by Albert Duffy. Original story by Alfred Block. Direction by Phil Rosen. Monogram Pictures.

A newspaper reporter and his bride of a few hours see a body fall from a skyscraper to the street in New York. Their honeymoon is thus rudely interrupted as the city editor insists that he follow up the story. The clues prove to be sinister and they involve his wife. He solves the mystery but uniquely, other papers scoop his story. The comedy is somewhat forced, and newspaper procedure is typical of movie technique. Direction is spotty, but it is an entertaining picture of its type.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Somewhat sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12
No

PENNY SERENADE ♦ ♦

Irene Dunne, Cary Grant, Beulah Bondi, Edgar Buchanan, Ann Doran, Eva Lee Kune, Leonard Willey, Wallis Clark, Walter Soderling, Baby Biddle. Story by Martha Cheavers. Screen play by Morris Ryskind. Produced and directed by George Stevens. Columbia.

Many scenes of "Penny Serenade" are as familiar, as comic, and as ultimately tragic as life itself, and they will endear themselves to parents because few have missed the experiences, or at least their implications. The film is a little long, the earlier sequences might have been judiciously shortened, but when the action is concerned with the family relationships, there is no flaw. It has been directed with sincerity and without sentimentality. It is a charming picture of real life.

The technique is reminiscent of that used in the French film, "Un Carnet de Bal," in which a middle-aged woman seeks out the men whose names appear on an old and faded dance program. In this, as a young woman awaits the railroad ticket which will take her away from marriage, she plays twelve phonograph records all intimately related to high lights in her married life: "You Were Meant for Me," "Just a Memory," "Japanese Sandman," "Silent Night,"

and others. It is the story of the courtship and marriage of two young people who, when, children are denied them, adopt a baby. They ask for a two-year-old child. He wants a boy, she wants a girl. But in the factual manner of adoptions, they are at last called to see a new born babe, and they recognize it as the only one they could have wanted, a tiny girl. Then follow the scenes no adult will easily forget, that frantic first night alone with the baby, the first bath, the night of the Christmas play when *Trina* (six years old) sings the echo behind the scenes. It is funny and it is heartrending. What breaks up this happy family is better seen than told, for it, too, will meet with sympathetic understanding, and the solution is genuine and heart-warming.

Cary Grant has never done a finer piece of acting. His plea before the Judge of Adoption for the right to keep their child is profoundly moving. Irene Dunne is very fine in her scenes with the new baby. Edgar Buchanan's comic relief is outstanding and Beulah Bondi's role is sympathetic and well written. Eva Lee Kuney is the appealing little girl at six and the two babies (new born and one year old) steal their scenes. The film has greater interest for adults than for children. It requires experience or imagination to appreciate it.

Adolescent, 12 to 16

Interesting, though perhaps mature

Children, 8 to 12

No interest

THERE'S MAGIC IN MUSIC ♦ ♦

This film was reviewed in March under the title "The Hard-Boiled Canary."

THEY DARED NOT LOVE ♦ ♦

George Brent, Martha Scott, Paul Lukas, Egon Brecher, Roman Bohnen, Edgar Barrier, Kay Linaker, Frank Reicher. Directed by James Whale. Screen play by Charles Bennett and Ernest Vajda. Columbia Pictures.

The pretentious mounting of this film is hardly justified by its weak material, and where the film gets its title is a mystery, since hero and heroine dared not only to love, but to marry. The opening scenes are in Vienna in the gorgeous palace of *Prince Kurt Von Rotenburg* and in a gay cafe where he goes for a last glimpse of Old Vienna as he flees from the approaching Nazi troops, and where he meets the young lady whose fate is to be linked with his. On a ship bound for America they fall in love, but because the girl is already engaged to another man she does not acknowledge her feelings. In New York the *Prince* for a while leads the life of a man-about-town, but eventually conceives a quixotic plan for aiding his countrymen. The film then becomes a tale of the Gestapo agents in America versus the *Prince*, whose influence

in Austria is a potential menace to Hitler's power. The cast should be good, but George Brent is not convincing as *Von Rotenburg* either in personality or in manner, and everyone suffers from the handicap of a mixture of English, American, and German accents, in some cases attached to wrong nationalities. Martha Scott's role gives her very little scope. Though the film is definitely anti-Nazi, it is very restrained compared to some of its predecessors and shows no brutality. It does, however, offer a disquieting idea of the power of the Gestapo in our country.

Adolescent, 12 to 16

Probably interesting

Children, 8 to 12

No interest

TUMBLE DOWN RANCH IN ARIZONA ♦

Ray Corrigan, John King, Max Terhune, Sheila Darey, Marian Kerby, Quen Ramsey, James Crasen. Screen play by Milton Raison. Direction by Roy Luky. Monogram.

Although the Range Busters are in this picture, it is disappointing because action is sacrificed to dialogue. A college student discusses the theory of the fourth dimension, which he has heard about in class and which is supposedly demonstrated to his satisfaction when after a fall in a rodeo, his mind wanders back forty years into the past and he has an adventure in pioneer days. The plot is involved, and it is necessary to follow the dialogue to understand the motives. This lessens the film's suitability for children. Action is reduced to a minimum, and even the possibilities of Arizona scenery are overlooked.

Adolescent, 12 to 16

Little interest

Children, 8 to 12

No interest

A VERY YOUNG LADY ♦ ♦

Jane Withers, Nancy Kelly, John Sutton, Janet Beecher, Richard Clayton, June Carlson, Charles Halton, Cecil Kellaway, Marilyn Kinsley, JoAnn Ransom, Catherine Henderson, Lucita Ham, June Horne. Screen play by Ladislav Fodor and Elaine Ryan. Direction by Harold Schuster. Muscial director Cyril J. Mockridge. Twentieth Century-Fox.

This is patently a new adaptation of a play by Ladislav Fodor which was presented on the screen in 1936 under the title "Girl's Dormitory," with Simone Simon and Herbert Marshall in the cast. It tells the story of an adolescent's infatuation for an older man, her school teacher, but this version is less emotional, less serious. It is thoroughly amusing because of the tomboyish character of the girl as played by Jane Withers. She suffers emotional growing pains but she recovers so satisfactorily that no scars are left. It is nicely acted, and Jane shows real maturity in her interpretation. It is good family entertainment.

Adolescent, 12 to 16

Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12

Unless bored by romance

THE WAGONS ROLL AT NIGHT ♦ ♦

Humphrey Bogart, Sylvia Sydney, Eddie Albert, Joan Leslie, Sig Ruman, Cliff Clark, Charley Fox, Frank Wilcox, John Ridgely, Clara Blandick, Aldrich Bowker. Screen play by Fred Niblo, Jr., and Barry Trivers, suggested by a story by Francis Wallace. Music by H. Roemheld. Photography by Sid Hickox, A.S.C. Direction by Ray Enright. Warner Bros.

The likeness of this plot to the prize fight film, "Kid Galahad," is too obvious to overlook. The idea is the same, the fine, clean youth and the tough guy with the kid sister whom he protects from all contact with his associates. Instead of a stadium the setting is a carnival, the ring is a circus ring, and the youth a lion trainer. *Nick Coster's* protection of his sister is a psychopathic phobia and in his madness he plans to have a lion kill the boy. The plan is diabolical. *Nick's* sentimental reform and sacrifice is the melodramatic finale. The plot is obvious from the first scenes. Eddie Albert and Joan Leslie are delightful in their roles, but the others are routine. While some may find enjoyment in the tense action, others will find it inartistic and morbid. It shows man at his worst.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
Terrifying

WASHINGTON MELODRAMA ♦ ♦

Frank Morgan, Ann Rutherford, Kent Taylor, Dan Dailey, Jr., Lee Bowman, Fay Holden, Virginia Grey, Anne Gwynne, Sara Haden, Olaf Hytten, Douglass Dumbrille, Cliff Clark, Hal K. Dawson, Thurston Hall, Joseph Crehan, Frederick Burton, Howard Hickman. Screen play by Marion Parsonnet and Roy Chanslor, based on a play by L. du Rocher Macpherson. Produced by Edgar Selwyn, directed by S. Sylvan Simon. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

"Washington Melodrama" is exactly what its title connotes. It tells the story of a respected political leader in Washington who, because of his rather unwise, though perhaps excusable and entirely platonic friendship with a night club entertainer, becomes involved with the underworld, is suspected of murder, and is saved from conviction by foolhardy sleuthing on the part of his beautiful young daughter.

Frank Morgan as *Calvin Claymore* gives an expert performance and makes the situation and character of the politician seem entirely plausible. Ann Rutherford as the daughter is charming, and Dan Dailey, Jr., is disagreeably convincing in his role of the *saucy* underworld night club owner.

Although a melodrama may be permitted to depart considerably from the realms of possibility, this one goes a bit too far when it takes a sheltered young girl alone into the apartment of a ruthless criminal and allows her to get away unscathed. In general, the film is good of its kind because of well-writ-

ten dialogue, high production values, and Frank Morgan's finished portrayal.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Undesirable type of
entertainment

Children, 8 to 12
No



A WOMAN'S FACE ♦ ♦

Joan Crawford, Melvyn Douglass, Conrad Veidt, Osa Massen, Reginald Owen, Albert Bassermann, Marjorie Main, Donald Meek, Connie Gilchrist, Richard Nichols, Henry Kolker. From the play, "Il Etait Une Fois," by Francis De Croisset. Screen play by Donald Ogden Stewart and Elliot Paul. Direction by George Cukor. Victor Saville production. M-G-M.

The tragedy of a horribly disfigured face also disfigures the soul of a woman. Her regeneration follows when, through plastic surgery, her face resumes its normal beauty. This is the theme of an unusual and dramatic picture which is an adaptation of a play once filmed in Sweden with Ingrid Bergman. The locale is Sweden, and the atmosphere is foreign. The hideous scar is the result of a burn, and it so distorts Miss Crawford's appearance that it is not difficult to understand that the woman she plays would be greatly handicapped for any normal life. *Anna Holm* has built up a protective shell by a cloak of ugly ruthlessness and has become the head of a band of blackmailers. When a man is apparently kind, she falls desperately in love. Quite accidentally she comes in contact with a plastic surgeon who removes the scar. But her infatuation for the man she loves still continues and she becomes his tool until her heart is softened by the normal associations she may now enjoy and regeneration follows.

The method of telling the story—opening with a trial and cutting back to the testimony of each witness—has been used frequently of late, but the photography gives a new quality which increases the smoothness of the action. It is exceptionally well acted by a distinguished cast. The denouement is highly dramatic. The ending alone is bad.

The writers have descended to giving the film a Hollywood touch. Not content with regeneration, they tack on a moral and a saccharine ending. Miss Crawford plays the miserable woman very consistently. Conrad Veidt is smoothly effective as the villain, Albert Bassermann has an endearing role which he plays delightfully, and Richard Nichols is the appealing, lovable child. Others in the cast are very fine, each adding undeniable strength and character to the plot. It is stark drama, out of the ordinary and worth seeing.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

ZIEGFELD GIRL ◇ ◇

James Stewart, Judy Garland, Hedy Lamarr, Lana Turner, Tony Martin, Jackie Cooper, Ian Hunter, Charles Winninger, Edward Everett Horton, Philip Dorn, Paul Kelly, Eve Arden, Dan Dailey, Jr., Al Shean, Fay Holden, Felix Bressart, Rose Hobart, Bernard Nedell, Ed McNamara, Mae Busch, Renie Riano, Josephine Whittell, Sergio Orta. Directed by Robert Z. Leonard. Screen play by Marguerite Roberts and Sonya Levien. Original story by William Anthony McGuire. Musical numbers by Busby Berkeley. Produced by Pandro S. Berman. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

A Ziegfeld Girl, according to this picture, may come in any of various models, differing not only in appearance but in character, and it is not the job but what the girl has in mind that determines her future. *Shiela Regan* (Lana Turner), weak, pleasure-loving and mercenary, prefers the donors of jewels and fur coats to her truck-driver sweetheart and makes a sordid tragedy of her life. *Susan*

Gallagher (Judy Garland), born trouser, level-headed and determined to succeed, becomes a head-liner. *Sandra Kolter* (Hedy Lamarr), neither play-girl nor trouser, takes the job for the money when her violinist husband is unable to find work, temporarily has her head turned by the attentions of a philandering tenor, but finds eventually that her husband's love is what she values most. The picture with its beautiful girls, gorgeous costumes and spectacular sets is lovely to look at, and the music adds to its entertainment value, but it would be just another elaborate musical production with a backstage plot were it not for Judy Garland's unusual freshness and charm and the several top-notch vaudeville acts.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Mature in theme,
though not objection-
able in treatment

Children, 8 to 12
No

SHORT SUBJECTS

THE MARCH OF TIME No. 8 ◇ ◇

"Australia at War"

Produced by the editors of "Time" Magazine. R. K. O.

Using statistics as a foundation, this picture makes them entertaining and alive by showing the vast quantities of war materials from Australia in the process of manufacture: rounding up cattle and sheep for food, wool and hides; iron mining, from underground to the finished weapons and trucks; training for ground and air fighting; views of the country's efficient navy. Anzac troops in Libya and Eritrea. Then follow scenes of the measures for protecting Australia, at Hong Kong, Singapore, in the Dutch West Indies, (with many native troops), in the Philippines and Hawaii.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Interesting and in-
structive

Children, 8 to 12
Yes



MORE TRIFLES OF IMPORTANCE ◇ ◇

Passing Parade Series.

This is a pleasing short in color, depicting the advances made in science from simple sources: An old woman discovers the wonderful effects of digitalis in heart disease from experimenting with her garden foxgloves; a doctor dips his burnt finger in tea and learns the inestimable value of tannic acid in treating burns.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

ONE-TWO-THREE-GO ◇ ◇

Our Gang comedy. M-G-M.

To present a constructive and valuable lesson through the medium of such favorites as the "Our Gang Comedies" is a step ahead that might well be followed by the makers of films for the young. This short loses none of its entertainment value by teaching the necessity for safety-first instruction, and it is a decided improvement on plots that deal solely with the comic aspects of mischief making.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Good



THE PROSPECTING BEAR ◇ ◇

M-G-M- Cartoon.

In spite of the beautiful coloring and delightful animation of the bear and the donkey, this is doubtful entertainment. It is distorted comedy, not clever, nor original. A bear goes out to dynamite huge rocks and meets a frolicking donkey who eats the explosive with the obvious and rather distressing results.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Mediocre

Children, 8 to 12
No

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

THE POWER AND THE LAND ♦ ♦

Rural Electrification Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Direction by Joris Ivens. Script by Edwin Locke. Commentary by Stephen Vincent Benet, narrated by William P. Adams. R. K. O.

This documentary film has far reaching social significance, for it portrays the importance of electricity on the farm. It takes the Parkinson Farm in Ohio as a typical middle class farm and shows the endless tasks shared by all members of the family inside the home and on the land, first without electrical power, then with it. Through the cooperative efforts of the farmers in the vicinity the power is brought in and the changes are seen, the time and effort saved on manual labor with the resulting opportunity for other duties which make for

greater efficiency. Indirectly this change benefits the cities in increased produce. Indirectly it reacts upon the nation as a whole, for with conveniences and better living in the country there will be less migration from the land on which the nation depends. The photography is excellent.

The commentary was written by Stephen Vincent Benet and the narrator has brought out the beauty and clarity.

The picture is pure documentary, put out by the U. S. Government. It is released through R.K.O. and is available without charge to any theatre. It is suggested that communities ask to have it shown. It is entertaining as well as informative and well worth seeing.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

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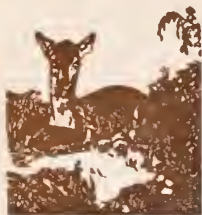
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FEATURE FILMS

ADVENTURE IN WASHINGTON ♦ ♦

Herbert Marshall, Virginia Bruce, Gene Reynolds, Samuel S. Hinds, Ralph Morgan, Vaughan Glaser, Charles Smith, Dickie Jones, Pierre Watkin, J. M. Kerrigan, Tommy Bond, Billy Dawson, Charles Lind. Screen play by Lewis Foster and Arthur Caesar from story by Jeanne Spencer and Albert Benham. Direction by Alfred E. Green. Produced by Charles R. Rogers. Columbia Pictures Corporation.

This picture gives an interesting side light on a new angle of Washington life, one not often touched upon, that of the activities of the page boys of the U. S. Senate. In some detail it shows the requirements necessary to become eligible for appointment, the schooling the boys receive, their duties, and their importance in the wheel of national government. It is on the whole an idealistic picture building respect for those in office and ending on a patriotic note which might have been very effective had it been handled more astutely.

Senator John Coleridge, under some indebtedness to a former colleague, is induced to get a page appointment for the colleague's son. It is an unfortunate move because the boy, now fatherless, has become a tough character who neither desires the appointment nor fits into the fine group of lads. The emotional drama shows the change in character the boy undergoes but the gradual

steps are too sketchily treated to make the reformation convincing, and the patriotic finale is so obviously introduced that it is neither impressive nor moving. Better writing, more sympathetic understanding of boys' psychology, their way of expressing themselves under the circumstances, would have helped the story materially. However, the theme is timely and informative. Gene Reynolds is excellent in his role, and the cast is generally extremely good. The love angle is held down to a minimum, and interest is rightly centered on the boys.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Interesting

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

ANGELS WITH BROKEN WINGS ♦ ♦

Binnie Barnes, Gilbert Roland, Mary Lee, Billy Gilbert, Jane Frazee, Edward Norris, Katherine Alexander, Leo Gorcey, Lois Ransson, Leni Lynn, Marilyn Hare, Sidney Blackmer, Tom Kennedy. Original story by George Carleton Brown. Screen play by George Carleton Brown and Bradford Ropes. Directed by Bernard Vorhaus. Republic Pictures.

A picture like this is a good measuring rod by which we can see how far the cinema has traveled since this sort of thing was the acme of screen entertainment. It is inoffensive slapstick of a decade ago, enacted with gusto by its youthful interpreters and including two rather catchy songs, but lacking

the cohesion and the polish demanded of most present-day movies. Billy Gilbert's part is not welded into the story and is evidently inserted to give this older actor opportunity to add a touch of professionalism to otherwise amateur acting. It is rather low class buffoonery, however, and does nothing to elevate the standard of the comedy.

The story concerns the efforts of three young girls to aid their mother in her plan to marry a prosperous divorced man. The complication is provided by the former wife who turns up unexpectedly to prove that the Mexican divorce is not legal. The daughters hit upon the plan of having the young friend of one of them pose as a rich Argentinean cattle king and woo the gold-digging wife. He is succeeding with her when the man whom he impersonates turns up. Incredibly he joins in the plan and wins the interest of the wife whose divorce then miraculously proves legal.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Perhaps amusing

Children, 8 to 12
No



BILLY THE KID ◇ ◇

Robert Taylor, Brian Donlevy, Ian Hunter, Mary Howard, Gene Lockhart, Lon Chaney, Jr., Henry O'Neill, Guinn Williams, Cy Kendall, Ted Adams, Frank Conlan, Frank Puglia, Mitchell Lewis, Dick Curtis, Grant Withers, Joe Yule. Screen play by Gene Fowler, suggested by the book "The Saga of Billy the Kid" by Walter Noble Burns. Direction by David Miller. M-G-M.

This exciting western melodrama outdoes its predecessors particularly in its magnificent Technicolor. The extravagantly gorgeous photography of ruddy mesas and towering rocks rising above desert mists gives it greater depth and importance than it would otherwise have with its rather typical plot of cattle rustlers, quick-on-the-trigger gun men, and a romanticized bandit hero. As for the moral issues involved they have to be judged in the light of pure fiction. The softening process of reformation puts the bandit in a sympathetic light, and there is throughout the picture a tendency to justify the violent crimes of a bloodthirsty killer.

The role of *Billy the Kid* is neatly played by Robert Taylor, and the cast as a whole is good.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
No, too violent



BLOOD AND SAND ◇ ◇

Tyrone Power, Linda Darnell, Rita Hayworth, Nazimova, Anthony Quinn, J. Carrol Naish, John Carradine, Lynn Bari, Laird Cregar, Ann Todd, Cora Sue Collins, Russell Hicks, Rex Downing. Based on novel by Vicente Blasco Ibanez. Screen play by Jo Swerling. Directed by Rouben Mamoulian. Produced by Darryl F. Zanuck. 20th Century-Fox.

The magnificence of the color in this pic-

ture has never before been approached on the screen. The film is said to have been treated by a special process to give it the quality of the paintings by old masters after which the composition of the scenes was designed, and it is truly a thing of surpassing beauty. The sets are exquisite architecturally, and the use of changing tones of color to accord with changing moods is subtly effective. A marked characteristic of the whole production is its sensual appeal: the frenzied emotionalism of the crowd at the bullfights; the decadently extravagant life of the successful matador, the fawning adulation of his hangers on, and his abject capitulation to the seductive Dona Sol. A spiritual note however is developed through the touching, beautifully enacted story of his marriage to the young girl whom he loves as a child and later marries. The scenario is well-written, moving steadily towards the climax and building up consistently to the inevitably tragic ending. After the early scenes of *Juan's* childish exploits, there is almost no humor to lighten the undercurrent of impending tragedy. The whole cast is extremely good, and so many of the supporting roles are outstanding that space precludes mentioning them by name.

Though quite different from the production in which Rudolph Valentino once took audiences by storm, this version is an intensely interesting drama, beautifully directed and unforgettable in its appeal to the eye.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Unsuitable

Children, 8 to 12
No



IN THE NAVY ◇ ◇

Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Dick Powell, Claire Dodd, The Andrews Sisters, Dick Foran, Butch and Buddy, and The Condos Brothers. Original story by Arthur T. Horman. Screen play by Arthur T. Horman and John Grant. Directed by Arthur Lubin. Universal Pictures.

"In the Navy" is, all Lou Costello's show. While many of the gags have been used before, they are perennially funny, as when a novice struggles to win control over a hammock. Lou is a cook on a battleship and his unique behavior, augmented by the suggestions of his pal, Bud Abbott, gets him into some rare situations. Dick Powell plays a radio favorite who joins the Navy in order to hide from his too admiring female fans. He spends much of his time escaping a zealous newspaper reporter but finds time to sing engagingly. Dick Foran and the Andrews Sisters also sing. The sisters may please their followers, but their unvaried routines become monotonous.

The Navy has allowed authentic backgrounds which add interest and color. The plot moves from the States to Hawaii and

into action on the high seas due to a spectacular nightmare in which *Pomerooy* (Lou Costello) indulges by means of a misplaced sleeping potion. The show is frankly rowdy slapstick but anyone who enjoyed the misadventures of Abbott and Costello in "Buck Privates" will laugh again at the lighter side of Navy life as these two comics carry on.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Entertaining



LOVE CRAZY ♦ ♦

William Powell, Myrna Loy, Gail Patrick, Jack Carson, Florence Bates, Sidney Blackmer, Sig Rumann, Valdimir Sokoloff, Donald MacBride, Sara Haden, Kathleen Lockhart, Fern Emmett, Joseph Crehan, George Meeker. Screen play by William Ludwig, Charles Lederer and David Hertz. Direction by Jack Conway. Pandro S. Berman, producer. M-G-M.

The domestic comedies of William Powell and Myrna Loy have changed materially since the days of "The Thin Man." No longer do we find the fun sophisticated. "Love Crazy" is fast and furious slapstick, amusing much of the time, frequently just silly, and there are moments when in dialogue and action it offends good taste.

The third wedding anniversary plans of *Steve* and *Susan* are rudely interrupted by the arrival of *Steve's* mother-in-law whose presence bores *Steve* and furthers a misunderstanding between the two until *Susan* decides to seek a divorce. At the light suggestion of his lawyer, *Steve* feigns insanity and although it starts as a joke, his actions are so astounding that he is ultimately assigned to an institution, William Powell has a hard working role pushing his mother-in-law into the swimming pool, hanging suspended in an elevator shaft, dashing in and out of scalding showers, and even doing a female impersonation in order to escape from the institution. Many of the gags are funny, although the film strives hard for laughs before the end. However it will doubtless find ready approval for many audiences as light summer fare.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Not recommended



MEN OF THE TIMBERLANDS ♦ ♦

Richard Arlen, Andy Devine, Linda Hayes, Willard Robertson, Francis McDonald, Hardie Albright, Paul E. Burns, Roy Harris, Gaylord Pendleton. Direction by Charles S. Gould. Universal Pictures.

This is a well-directed, tense, emotional action drama of the great northwest timber country. It is the story of lawless murders

executed by a half-breed under the direction of a ruthless boss who is endeavoring to swindle a society girl out of her inheritance by removing more timber than is permitted by the Government. A Government official with the aid of an expert logger uncovers the plot.

The action is violent but is in accordance with the life it pictures. Richard Arlen and Andy Devine give force and distinction to the film, and Andy Devine proves himself capable of real emotional acting. The scenes of the timber country are very fine and the work of felling great trees is interesting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Exciting and interesting

Children, 8 to 12
Too tense



MILLION DOLLAR BABY ♦ ♦

Priscilla Lane, May Robson, Ronald Reagan, Jeffry Lynn, Lee Patrick, Helen Westley, George Barbier, Nan Wynn, John Qualen, Walter Catlett, Fay Helm. Screen play by Casey Robinson, Richard Macaulay and Jerry Wald from a story by Leonard Spigelgass. Direction by Curtis Bernhardt. Warner Bros.-First National.

The original title of the film was "Miss Wheelwright Discovers America." Had the focus of attention been kept throughout on *Miss Wheelwright*, the film would have been even more entertaining, because it is this eccentric, crotchety, lovable character, which Miss Robson plays so engagingly, that one remembers. *Miss Wheelwright*, an expatriot living on inherited wealth in Europe, and having at last settled in Switzerland, the single country left where free expression is allowed, suddenly learns that her father defrauded his partner many years before. To right this wrong she takes the Clipper immediately to America to seek the heir and finds the granddaughter living in a cheap boarding house and working at a department store. She takes a room at the boarding house, is impressed by *Pamela*, and gives her a million dollars. Interest is then focused on *Pamela's* reactions to her fortune and her decision that love is more important than wealth without it.

Miss Robson's role is rich in humor. Her lines poke fun at some of our less dignified American manners. Priscilla Lane, Ronald Reagan and Jeffry Lynn are appealing and play their parts with youthful zest. Helen Westley and the boarding house inmates are colorful and funny. One scene where *Pamela* imbibes too freely on her first experience at a night club is unnecessary and somewhat mars an otherwise entertaining, light program film.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Little interest

NAVAL ACADEMY ◇ ◇

Freddie Bartholomew, Jimmy Lydon, Billy Cook, Pierre Watkin, Warren Ashe. Original screen play by David Silverstein and Gordon Rigby. Based upon a story by James Cosgriff. Directed by Earle C. Kenton. Columbia Pictures.

The setting of this picture is "State Naval Academy" which fortunately cannot be identified as any school actually in existence. The plot is hackneyed. The main characters are three boys from different environments. One is a tough boy from a reform school who becomes the finest man of all and lies "nobly" to save a friend. One is from rich society. He is disgustingly spoiled and actually blackmails another but eventually repents and goes straight. The third, descendant of Admirals, cheats in an examination and embezzles, but confesses when a pal tries to take the blame. One of the most unpleasant characters is the sniveling Head of the reform school. The Head of the Naval Academy and the athletic coach make uplifting speeches but enforce discipline in a way that seems, to say the least, unenlightened. Hazing is in order, and a vicious fight takes place in which one poor lad fights in turn three upper classmen. They all wear boxing gloves but even so, this is a protracted display of brutality and poor sportsmanship. It is hard to believe that the picture could be a happy experience for any person of any age, for one is in a constant state of revolt against the stupidity and injustice of the boys' treatment. How these youths could emerge from such a school as gentlemen and patriots is a mystery.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Poor

Children, 8 to 12
No

OUT OF THE FOG ◇ ◇

Ida Lupino, John Garfield, Thomas Mitchell, John Qualen, Eddie Albert, George Tobias, Aline MacMahon, Jerome Cowan, Odette Myrtil, Leo Gorcey, Robert Homans, Paul Harvey, Paul Gorcey. Screen play by Robert Rossen, Jerry Wald and Richard Macaulay. Adapted from the stage play "The Gentle People" by Irwin Shaw. Direction by Anatole Litvak. Photography by James Wong Howe, A.S.C. Warner Bros. First National Pictures.

"Out of the Fog" is an excellent adaptation of "The Gentle People," the story of two gentle, frustrated, old men who strive to hold to their philosophy of peace and good will to men against the ugly brutality of a ruthless, petty grafter. When this gangster is found to be preying also upon the daughter of one, they finally turn, as the meek may do, and plot to destroy the persecutor. Fate comes to their rescue, and the ending, although sentimental, tends to illuminate the premise that "the meek shall inherit the earth." It is an emotional and exciting drama, rising to heights of almost

unbearable tension at times but it has also moments of rich, if ironical, humor. It is superbly acted and directed.

The cast is splendidly chosen. John Qualen and Thomas Mitchell are outstanding in their portrayals of the two men, a chef and a tailor, whose only release from a drab existence is found in the ownership of a river skiff moored off the Brooklyn shore in which, four nights a week, they escape all problems, by going fishing. Their only ambition is to own a larger boat in which to sail to the warm, sunny waters of Florida. John Garfield is the savage grafter, a character so overpoweringly cruel that he becomes the symbol of all ruthless persecutors. Ida Lupino plays the daughter, another frustrated creature, who hungers for the unusual in life and is fascinated as well as revolted by this brutal man who excites her imagination. Aline MacMahon is perfect as her mother, a grumbling, selfish termagant, and Odette Myrtil also is memorable as the shrewish employer who wishes a more sentimental arrangement with her pathetic chef.

The film is beautifully produced. The lighting and photography create an atmosphere appropriate to the theme, the direction is restrained, and each individual performance is outstanding.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable;
brutal

PIRATES ON HORSEBACK ◇ ◇

William Boyd, Russell Hayden, Andy Clyde, Eleanor Stewart, Morris Ankrum, William Haade. Screen play by Ethel La Blanche and J. Benton Cheney. Direction by Lesley Selander. Harry Sherman Production (Paramount release).

The three inseparables, *Hopalong Cassidy*, *Lucky* and *California*, are off on new adventures, riding this time as Western knights errant to save a damsel in distress. The object of their solicitude is a charming young girl who has come to the frontier to claim property left her by an uncle. Because the inheritance is known to contain a fabulous, hidden gold mine, her life and fortunes are endangered by a smooth villain and his cohorts. There is swift action and spirited riding, and the mountain scenery is unusually beautiful even for a series which is noted for its fine outdoor photography.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Yes, except for
the easily excited

REDHEAD ◇ ◇

June Lang, Johnny Downs, Eric Blore, Weldon Heyburn, Anna Chandler, Frank Jaquet, Zarova, Baron Emerson, Harry Burns, Donald Thompson. Screen play by Conrad Seiler and Dorothy Reid based on novel by Beth Brown. Direction by Edward Cahn. Monogram Pictures.

A theme currently popular in movies is

used again in "Redhead." An efficient young woman marries a weakling rich boy and undertakes to make a man of him. In this instance the girl accepts his casual proposal of marriage because she needs a meal ticket. She arranges secretly with his father that she is to be paid a large sum if she succeeds in curing him of his playboy habits, and she makes a bargain with the youth that their marriage is to be strictly a business partnership. They sell his car to buy a hotdog stand with living quarters in the rear, and with the assistance of *Digby*, his family butler, they try to earn a living. It does not take second sight to anticipate that love will shortly complicate the partnership. The film goes in rather obviously for whimsicality but the effort to be amusing seems rather futile when the young husband gets pathetically and belligerently drunk. The idea of the film seems to be that when the young people have acknowledged their mutual love, their life is going to be rosy, but to the skeptical observer it looks as though the future might be pretty black at times, and the spectacle of a drunken youth is too pathetic to be taken lightly.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

THE RELUCTANT DRAGON ♦ ♦

Robert Benchley, Frances Gifford, Nana Bryant, Barnett Parker, Buddy Pepper, Claud Allister, Billy Lee, Florence Gill, Clarence Nash, Norm Ferguson, Jimmy Luske, Ward Kimball, Alan Ladd, Hamilton MacFadden, Maurice Murphy, and the staff of the Walt Disney Studio. Screen play by Ted Sears, Al Perkins, Larry Clemmons, Bill Cottrell, Harry Clork. Musical score by Frank Churchill and Larry Morey. Song, "The Reluctant Dragon" by Charles Wolcott, Ed Penner, and T. Hee. Special sound effects by Sonovox. Direction by Alfred Werker. Walt Disney, R. K. O.

How many of us have wished that we could look in upon Walt Disney and his clever staff and see his beloved and whimsical characters come to life, Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Clara Cluck, Pluto and all the others! Mr. Disney must have known this for he now gives us the opportunity of visiting his new and spacious studio just outside of Hollywood in the San Fernando Valley. In company with Robert Benchley, whose presence at once makes us realize that we shall have great fun, we enter the gates, armed with a story, which Mr. Benchley wishes the studio to film. It is that delightfully comic fairy tale by Kenneth Graham, "The Reluctant Dragon," in which *Sir Giles* and *Boy* go out to fight the dragon which had been terrorizing the English country-side long, long ago.

Mr. Benchley is given a guide to take him to "Walt," but having an exploratory yen, he quite deliberately gets lost and wanders into every nook and cranny of the studio. First, he visits the life class where a huge elephant is being sketched and by slight exaggeration made into a cartoon creature whose characteristics are satirized, and made amusing. He finds himself among the sound effects where a comical little engine puffs and wheezes across the screen; he meets the voice of *Donald Duck* and *Clara Cluck*; sees the colorful mixing of the paints, the animators at work, the Process Laboratory, the Camera Building; is clutched by writers who wish his reaction to a new idea; and views the cleverly satirical sequence, "Baby Weems." Finally, at long last, his guide locates him and assumes control, taking him to Walt Disney who is in a projection room running off a new film. To his relief and delight it is "The Reluctant Dragon."

This is ideal, family entertainment, for there is something in it for all ages. It is amusing and informative as well. It shows the studio technique in far more detail than any one on a regulated tour would ever see. We catch the splendid enthusiasm and co-operative spirit of the studio and meet the young, alert and attractive staff. The injected cartoons are delightful, and there are no frightening sequences to alarm the youngest spectator.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent;
recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Excellent

THE RICHEST MAN IN TOWN ♦ ♦

Frank Craven, Edgar Buchanan, Eileen O'Hern, Roger Pryor, Tom Dugan, George McKay, Jimmy Dodd, Jan Dugan, John Tyrrell, Harry Tyler, Will Wright, Joel Friedkin. Screen play by Fanya Foss and Jerry Sackheim from story by Jerry Sackheim. Direction by Charles Barton. Columbia Pictures.

This is a simple little story of two old friends whose constant quarrels hide the deep understanding and love they actually feel for each other. *Abb Crothers* (Frank Craven) and *Pete Marshall* (Edgar Buchanan) have grown up together from boyhood in the small town of *Weston, Abb* to become a wealthy banker, *Pete*, the editor of the local paper. Differing with his friend on every possible subject, *Abb* secretly rescues *Pete* from the results of his idealistic but misguided stubbornness which constantly threatens to bankrupt him. What these ventures are is less important than the study of these two friendly enemies, their vagaries, and the underlying respect and devotion which come to the front at crises.

It is a homespun tale which is different from the usual film fare, and both Frank Craven and Edgar Buchanan add distinction by their performances.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Little interest

Children, 8 to 12
No interest



SCATTERGOOD PULLS THE STRINGS ✦

Guy Kibbee, Bobs Watson, Susan Peters, James Corner, Emma Dunn, Dink Trout, Monte Blue, Carl Stockdale, Paul White, Ann Shoemaker. Original screen play by Christy Cabanne and Bernard Schubert, adapted from the American Magazine stories by Clarence Budington Kelland. Direction by Christy Cabanne. R. K. O.

Clarence Budington Kelland's kindly, benevolent character, *Scattergood Baines* again sets the world right. He turns the inventive genius of a young chemist into a practical channel and smooths the path of true love for him and his sweetheart. He also takes a runaway from the orphanage into his home and reunites the boy with his father. It is a sentimental, unsophisticated, pleasant little tale, nicely acted and set in simple village surroundings. An irresistible little dog wins stellar honors.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Good



SHE KNEW ALL THE ANSWERS ✦ ✦

Joan Bennett, Franchot Tone, John Hubbard, Eve Arden, William Tracy, Pierre Watkin, Almira Sessions, Thurston Hall, Grady Sutton. Screen play by Harry Segal, Kenneth Earl, Curtis Kenyon based on story by Jane Allen. Produced by Charles R. Rogers. Direction by Richard Wallace, Columbia Pictures.

Although one knows from the beginning what the outcome of this plot will be, it does not matter materially because of the many diverting interludes. A night club chorus girl gets a job in a broking office in order to work her charms on her fiancé's uncle who disapproves the marriage. At the telephone switchboard she is naively inept and by misunderstanding the business jargon creates a panic in the sale of some South American bonds. The turning of the catastrophe into a victory for the firm is hilariously maneuvered. Her remodeling of the stodgy broker into a human being is very funny and some of the most amusing scenes are when he tries her suggested eye exercises. The cast is excellent throughout. Franchot Tone is delightful; John Hubbard and Eve Arden take full advantage of some very funny situations, and though Joan Bennett's work is uneven, on the whole she is very good. The picture is clean fun, and

this alone would garner praise at a time when screwball comedy so frequently injects vulgarity to win laughter.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
If interested



SHINING VICTORY ✦ ✦

James Stephenson, Geraldine Fitzgerald, Donald Crisp, Barbara O'Neil, Sig Ruman, George P. Huntley, Jr. Screen play by Howard Koch and Anne Froelick from a play by A. J. Cronin. Direction by Irving Rapper. Warner Bros.

A research man reaches the very difficult goal for which he has been striving and his assistant accomplishes as difficult an assignment by making him a human being. Thus in spite of personal tragedy, a "shining victory" is wrought.

Dr. Venner is an embittered physician who is forced out of Budapest after important discoveries from experiments on the treatment of mental cases are stolen from him by his superior. He returns to Scotland and takes a poorly paid position on the staff of a sanitarium where he may have laboratory facilities by which to continue his work. His surly concentration on his work, his irritable intolerance of unscientific treatment of cases, and his refusal to countenance any publicity of results until proof is positive, make him unpopular with his associates. The constructive and healing influence of a young, attractive, woman interne, assigned as his assistant, gradually civilizes him, and her outspoken condemnation of his cold blooded scientific attitude, awakens him to self analysis. Their mutual love humanizes him.

The plot is very well developed, and the exceptionally fine acting makes the film convincing. James Stephenson surpasses his performance in "The Letter," which attracted so much attention. Geraldine Fitzgerald is an ideal choice for the intelligent, chaste girl who by training and character is qualified to bring about his spiritual metamorphosis. Barbara O'Neil is excellent as a sad introvert whose mind breaks under the strain of frustrated emotions. Donald Crisp and others are well cast. The story, as is usual in Dr. Cronin's writings, upholds the ideals of the medical profession. Though an insane asylum is not a happy setting, the abnormal is not forced upon the spectators and the unfortunate plight of the inmates is only suggested. The love story is mature and spiritual and does not concede to popular taste by a sentimental ending. It is a problem play which should prove of absorbing interest for adults.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too mature

Children, 8 to 12
No

SUNNY ♦ ♦

Anna Neagle, Ray Bolger, John Carrol, Edward Everett Horton, Grace Hartman, Paul Hartmann, Frieda Inescort, Helen Westley, Benny Rubin, Muggins Davies, Richard Lane, Martha Tilton. Screen play by Sig Herzig from the musical comedy book and lyrics by Otto Harback and Oscar Hammerstein II. Music by Jerome Kern. Produced and directed by Jerome Kern. R. K. O.

"Sunny" is delightfully gay and musical and it is undoubtedly the most successful transference to the screen of any of the light operettas in which Herbert Wilcox and Anna Neagle have joined their talents. While it seems almost a sacrilege to use a fine dramatic actress in so light a trifle, Miss Neagle is nevertheless charming as *Sunny*. She dances exquisitely and she sings several of the beloved tunes from the original musical comedy. The setting is the colorful Mardi Gras in New Orleans where a traveling circus is playing. At the carnival *Sunny* meets *Larry Warren*, a wealthy socialite, and the plot concerns her reception by his aristocratic and socially conscious family, the difficulties encountered, and the smoothing of the lovers' path by an eccentric, old, maiden aunt played with delicious humor by Helen Westley. Ray Bolger, as one of the circus troupe, has opportunity to display his really remarkable dancing ability, Edward Everett Horton is cleverly amusing, and Grace and Paul Hartman are excellent, although not perhaps so outstanding on the screen as might have been anticipated.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

TIGHT SHOES ♦ ♦

John Howard, Binnie Barnes, Brod Crawford, Anne Gwynne, Leo Carrillo, Samuel S. Hinds, Shemp Howard, Richard Lane, Sarah Padden, Ed Gargan. Original story by Damon Runyon. Screen play by Leonard Spigelgass and Art Arthur. Direction by Albert S. Rogell. Universal Pictures.

Tight shoes which cause agony to their wearers alter the normal paths of destiny for two young men. First, a gangster, ace lieutenant of the Master-Mind, buys a pair from a shore clerk. In his misery he disobeys orders, an act which causes his downfall and the rise to political power of the clerk. Down on his luck, the gangster in turn becomes a shoe clerk and has the golden opportunity to become an avenging Nemesis by sending tight shoes to the other man, thus setting in motion another cataclysm.

It's all broad satire, fast moving, slapstick in humor, and very well acted by

Brod Crawford and Binnie Barnes who capably carry the laughs. As with any farce of this type, enjoyment is largely a matter of taste, but "Tight Shoes" has the advantage of a novel story and adept production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Requires adult
evaluation

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable

TIME OUT FOR RHYTHM ♦ ♦

Rudy Vallee Ann Miller, Rosemary Lane, Allen Jenkins, Joan Merrill, Mike Armstrong, Richard Lane, Stanley Andrews and The Three Stooges, Brenda and Cobina, Six Hits and A Miss, Eddie Durant's Rhumba Orchestra, Glen Gray and his Casa Loma Band. Story by Bert Granet, based on a play by Alex Ruben. Screen play by Edmund L. Hartmann and Bert Lawrence. Direction by Sidney Salkow. Columbia.

There is nothing in "Time Out for Rhythm" which has not been done better a dozen times before. The plot, concerning two radio agents whose friendship is periodically disrupted by a self-seeking female headliner, is so pitifully thin that conceivably the picture might have been assembled from bits left over from other films. Radio fans will doubtless be diverted by a number of popular performers such as Rudy Vallee, the Three Stooges, Brenda and Cobina, and Eddie Durant's and Glen Gray's orchestras. Some of the songs are catchy, some mediocre. Those who have had no previous interest in this group of performers will find the production boring.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Dull

Children, 8 to 12
No

TOO MANY BLONDES ♦ ♦

Rudy Vallee, Helen Parrish, Lon Chaney, Jr., Jerome Cowan, Shemp Howard, Iris Adrian, Eddie Quillan Irving Bacon, Jeanne Kelly, Gus Schilling. Screen play by Maxwell Shane and Louis S. Kaye from an original story by Maxwell Shane. Direction by Thornton Freeland. Universal.

Too many blondes in any married man's life might easily cause his wife to be annoyed, but when another man is determined to break up the marriage the situation becomes obviously complicated. That is the slender plot with which Rudy Vallee, Helen Parrish and Jerome Cowan have to struggle. The three are en route to Hollywood for a radio contract. On the train *Dick* meets a group of blondes with whom he once worked in vaudeville. Their too fervent greetings arouse *Virginia's* jealousy which is encouraged by *Ted*. When *Dick* sits in on a poker game and the car is switched off to San Francisco unknown to him, *Virginia* agrees to a divorce. Only when she thinks that he has gone into the surf to commit suicide

does she relent. The trio then is dissolved into a duo and a rich radio contract follows. What comedy there is is injected by Lon Chaney, Jr., Iris Adrian, Eddie Quillan and Gus Schilling.

Rudy Vallee deserves a better role. His singing bolsters up the feeble trifle but the other two do not add much vocally. Helen Parrish has had better parts. In this she has no opportunity to be other than a peevish, petty wife.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

WEST POINT WIDOW ♦ ♦

Anne Shirley, Richard Carleson, Richard Denning, Frances Gifford, Maude Eburne, Janet Beecher, Cecil Kellaway, Archie Twitchell, Lillian Randolph, Patricia Farr, Sharon Lynne and Deanna Jean Hall, Eddie Conrad. Screen play by F. Hugh Herbert and Hans Kraly based on story by Anne Wormser. Direction by Robert Siodmak. Paramount.

Anne Shirley and Richard Carleson make a very pleasing team in this comedy romance. The two have a naturalness and a sincerity which are most appealing. The story concerns the marriage of a young nurse and a

West Point Cadet which has been annulled because of their youth. Loyal to him, proud of his career, and true to her promise, the girl does not try to see him and does not even tell him of the child which has been born. She waits confidently for his graduation day when she is sure that he will reclaim her. In the meantime an interne in the hospital becomes interested in her and discovers her secret. The complications account for many amusing situations. The ending, which we shall not divulge, is entirely satisfactory to the audience, except that the nurse is suddenly made to appear harsh and vindictive, temporarily out of character with the human and lovable person she has been up to that point. The child is portrayed by two delightful babies. Maude Eburne is very funny as the goodnatured slattern who runs the boarding house. The hospital scenes are humorous and yet retain the orderly dignity of such an institution. The director has maintained interest throughout in this light and entertaining program feature.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
If interested

Children, 8 to 12
Probably less
entertaining

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FEATURE FILMS

ACCENT ON LOVE ♦ ♦

George Montgomery, Osa Massen, J. Carrol Naish, Corbina Wright, Jr., Stanley Clements, Minerva Urecia, Thurston Hall. Directed by Ray McCarey. 20th Century-Fox.

The title gives a false impression of the theme of this picture, for although a triangle love interest plays a part in the plot, it is a side issue. The picture has little that is outstanding either in acting or in production value. It stresses Americanism in a roundabout way, since immigrants have all the patriotism, while the capitalistic citizen is shown in a very bad light. It plays up the old story of the heartless landowner who has to be shown that tenants are entitled to decent living conditions.

John Hyndman becoming fed up with his snobbish wife and with being continually told what to do, leaves his high station in life to dig ditches with the WPA workers and to sleep in their tenements. There he meets a pretty Swedish girl who inspires him to protest to the landlord (who incidentally is both his boss and his father-in-law) about the conditions in which they are living. He makes

his father-in-law see the light by persuading him to live in one of these hovels for a night. Thus he is given control of the property and his society wife is sent to Reno to clear the way for the Swedish girl to become *Mrs. John Hyndman*.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Passable

Children, 8 to 12
No interest

BACHELOR DADDY ♦ ♦

Baby Sandy, Edward Everett Horton, Donald Woods, Raymond Walburn, Evelyn Ankers, Kathryn Adams, Franklin Pangborn, Bert Roach, Jed Prouty, George Meader. Direction by Harold Young. Universal.

This is a gay, rollicking, unpretentious little picture featuring Baby Sandy who maintains her wide-eyed innocence as she gets into many varieties of mischief. In the play her mother, locked in the city jail for selling home-made candy without a license, sends a note to "*Mr. Smith*" at the Bachelors' Club to care for Sandy during the emergency. Since there are three *Smiths*, two of them impersonated by Edward Everett Horton and Raymond Walburn, there is a good deal of comedy before the baby leaves the

sanctum for bachelors. The film is marred by a terrifying sequence at the end, but since Sandy's life is not threatened, this is less hair-raising than her exploits in former pictures. Is it too much to hope for a Sandy picture without these dangerous predicaments?

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Yes

Children, 8 to 12

No; needs older point of view to understand situations

BARNACLE BILL

Wallace Berry, Virginia Weidler, Marjorie Main, Leo Carrillo, Donald Meek, Barton MacLane, Connie Gilchrist, Sara Haden, William Edmunds, Don Terry, Alec Craig. Screen play by Jack Jevne and Hugo Butler based on original by Jack Jevne. Direction by Richard Thorpe. M-G-M.

Wallace Beery does not vary his performances. His vehicles always allow him to be the slovenly bum whether he is a Civil War renegade or a brawling, drunken fisherman, as he is in this film. The plot is woven around unethical practices which lead to violent fights and bitter enmity among the tuna fishermen at San Pedro. Marjory Main is seen as a hard-boiled spinster who is usually the victim of *Barnacle Bill's* oily tongue, but has a soft spot in her heart for him nevertheless. Virginia Weidler plays his thirteen-year-old daughter, who appears on the scene after years of separation, and again she gives a sterling performance. Together, the two women reform the old reprobate, but not without a struggle and many discouragements. Running true to form, Wallace Beery will not disappoint his admirers. The film is pictorially interesting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

No value

Children, 8 to 12

No

BLONDIE IN SOCIETY

Penny Singleton, Arthur Lake, Larry Sims, Daisy, Jonathan Hale, Danny Mummert, Edgar Kennedy, Irving Bacon, Chick Chandler. Screen play by Karen DeWolf based on comic strip created by Chic Young. Direction by Frank R. Strayer. Columbia Pictures.

Poor *Dagwood* literally gets into the doghouse in this very diverting episode in the lives of *Dagwood*, *Blondie* and *Baby Dumpling*, and *Daisy* is called upon to be hospitable to a great Dane. It all comes about because *Dagwood* is generous to an old friend who owns a kennel, but *Blondie* looks coldly upon *Chin-Up-White-Tie-for-Dinner*, who, although a champion and capable of winning prizes, is unpopular with dog fanciers because of his reluctance to exhibit his

good points at dog shows. To say that *Chin-Up* disturbs the *Bumpstead* household is putting it mildly, but *Blondie* learns the trick of handling him and all ends well and hilariously.

Although the title is somewhat of an enigma, actually the *Bumpsteads* are back in their normal environment and their delicious problems will afford spontaneous laughter. *Baby Dumpling* is now old enough to join the Boy Rangers, who through the medium of the Robert Mitchell Boy Choir, entertain with *Blondie*. Miss Singleton sings pleasantly. *Chin-Up* and *Daisy* are real troupers who deserve applause.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Good fun

Children, 8 to 12

Suitable and entertaining

BLOSSOMS IN THE DUST

Greer Garson, Walter Pidgeon, Felix Bressart, Marsha Hunt, Fay Holden, Samuel S. Hinds, Kathleen Howard, George Lessey, William Henry, Henry O'Neill, John Elledge, Clinton Rosemond, Theresa Harris, Charlie Arnt, Cecil Cunningham, Ann Morris, Richard Nichols, Pat Barker, Mary Taylor, Marc Lawrence. Story by Ralph Wheelwright. Screen play by Anita Loos. Directed by Mervyn Le Roy. A Mervyn Le Roy Production. M-G-M.

Edna Gladney, who founded the Texas Children's Home and Aid Society, and who is still carrying on her work, pioneered in a branch of social service that has much appeal to the public, for her life has been dedicated to the helping of little children. Like most pioneers, she encountered and overcame seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and the story of her accomplishment is truly dramatic. Especially so was her successful fight in the Texas legislature to have the word, "illegitimate" removed from the birth certificates of children born out of wedlock.

Greer Garson in the part of Edna Gladney, creates a lovely character who should win more new converts to Mrs. Gladney's splendid cause. The well written script will undoubtedly spread a more understanding interest in the work of home finding societies everywhere. The treatment of the subject is popular rather than scientific, and due to the several tragic events in Mrs. Gladney's life, the film is sometimes extremely emotional, but it is never mawkish. Walter Pidgeon as Mrs. Gladney's husband is most sympathetic in an appealing role. The period costumes and settings of the earlier sequences add interest, and Technicolor makes the film more vivid.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Emotional, but interesting

Children, 8 to 12

No

THE BIG STORE ♦ ♦

Groucho Marx, Chico Marx, Harpo Marx, Tony Martin, Virginia Grey, Margaret Dumont, Douglass Dumbrille, Six Hits and a Miss. Screen play by Sid Kuller, Hal Fimberg and Ray Golden. Original story by Nat Perrin. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Since the Marx Brothers are always the Marx Brothers, whether at the opera, on a ranch, or in a department store, there is nothing new left to say about them. In this picture they dive down elevator shafts, ride bicycles on showcases, and perform their various acrobatic and musical specialties with their customary zest and skill. The plot is a nightmarish sort of thing about certain people chasing others through a store and trying to murder them. There are some extremely funny sequences and good musical numbers, but the film as a whole is not particularly clever.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Probably harmless

THE BRIDE CAME C.O.D. ♦ ♦

Bette Davis, James Cagney, Stuart Erwin, Eugene Palette, Jack Carson, George Tobias, Harry Davenport, William Frawley, Edward Brophy. Screen play by Julius J. and Philip G. Epstein from a story by Kenneth Earl and M. M. Mullselman. Direction by William Keighley. Music by Max Steiner. Warner Bros.

It is good to find Bette Davis and James Cagney in comedy for a change. Miss Davis as *Joan Winfield* is the spoiled, thrill-seeking daughter of a tycoon, who upon short acquaintance has agreed to marry a popular band leader. A gossip columnist in search of exciting copy persuades them to elope and the fun begins, as "*Pater*" gives the job of stopping the elopement to an impecunious aviator (James Cagney), who agrees to kidnap the heiress and deliver her C.O.D. at the usual freight rates. The aviator's plan is interrupted. They make a forced landing and their adventures in a ghost town on the desert are comically contrived. It is all light and diverting, a relaxing hour of nonsense in which Miss Davis and Mr. Cagney show aptitude for comedy. The musical score is cleverly appropriate.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

CAUGHT IN THE DRAFT ♦ ♦

Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour, Lynne Overman, Eddie Bracken, Clarence Kolb, Paul Hurst, Ferike Boros, Phyllis Ruth, Irving Bacon, Arthur Loft. Original story and screen play by Harry Tugend. Directed by David Butler. Paramount.

While this is not one of the best of Bob Hope's vehicles, it will provide a lot of laughs for civilians and selectees alike, for it makes good-natured fun of blundering rookies and uses situations which, though possibly exaggerated, will recall many a real

happening to all who have experienced camp life or been told about it. The cast is good, and the action swings along at a fast pace. Bob Hope plays the part of a movie star trying to evade the draft. After a number of silly exploits, he wins the Colonel's daughter and becomes a hero.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Harmless

DANCE HALL ♦ ♦

Carole Landis, Cesar Romero, William Henry, June Storey, Edward J. Romberg. Screen play by Stanley Rauh and Ethel Hill based on novel by W. R. Burnett. Direction by Irving Pichel. 20th Century-Fox.

This comedy drama is a "Grand Hotel" cross-section of events in the lives and loves of those connected with a dance hall. It has little plot, no suspense and no climax and is of interest only because the generally unadmirable characters are presented by a capable cast. The atmosphere and setting are typical, and the dialogue is suitable, if rather cheap.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Poore ethics

Children, 8 to 12
No

FORCED LANDING ♦ ♦

Richard Arlen, Eva Gabor, J. Carrol Naish, Nils Asther, Evelyn Brent, Mikhail Rasumny, Victor Varconi, John Miljan, Bobby Dillon. Screen play by Maxwell Shane and Edward Churchill. Direction by Gordon Wells. Paramount.

Set in a mythical country with a South American atmosphere, this romantic action melodrama is brought up to the minute by an entertaining plot concerned with a revolutionary party conspiring against Fifth Columnists in the Government. Richard Arlen plays an American aviator who has been grounded in his own country and who joins the army flying service in this small country, only to discover that insidious danger is associated with the job. Romance is included in his perilous adventure and the final scenes are full of action in the air. Dialogue somewhat hampers continuity, and America is played up as the haven for ice cream cones and football games, but after an hour of intrigue and danger, it is relaxing to remember that there is at least one country left where these diversions may seem important.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Fair

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting

HURRY, CHARLIE, HURRY ♦ ♦

Leon Errol, Mildred Coles, Kenneth Howell, Cecil Cunningham, George Watts, Eddie Conrad, Nobel Johnson, Douglas Walton, Renee Haal, Georgia Caine, Lalo Encinas. Screen play by Paul Gerard Smith. Direction by Charles E. Roberts. R. K. O.

Leon Errol announces to the audience that "*Charlie*" is not in the plot, thus setting the pace for nonsensical slapstick comedy which

might as well have had any title. Errol plays a small town politician named *Daniel Boone*, who is under the thumb of his socially ambitious wife. *Boone* sneaks off on a fishing trip, but to keep his wife and the town's people under the impression that he was on political business, upon his return he plans a dinner party with the Vice-President as guest of honor. Errol impersonates this gentleman. These scenes are the best in the film. The humor is broad but clean and may amuse the children more than the adults. But it serves as a relaxing antidote to the more serious pictures on programs today.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Harmless fun

MAN HUNT

Walter Pidgeon, Joan Bennett, George Sanders, John Carradine, Roddy McDowell, Ludwig Stossel, Heather Thatcher, Frederick Worlock, Roger Imhof. Screen play by Dudley Nichols from an "Atlantic" short story and novel "Rogue Male" by Geoffrey Household. Directed by Fritz Lang. Music by Alfred Newman. Associate Producer Kenneth Macgowan. 20th Century-Fox.

Captain Thorndike (Walter Pidgeon), internationally famous big game hunter, on a Continental vacation, stalks Hitler as he would a beast of prey. Eluding all the guards protecting Der Fuehrer, he is discovered high on a cliff overlooking a garden, sighting Hitler through the telescope finder. He draws the trigger, but there is no report, for he has purposely omitted the cartridge. In a contemplative mood he loads the gun and sights again, but we do not know what he might have done, for at that moment he is captured. Then follows tense and exciting action. He escapes, hounded by the horrible and uncompromising power of the Gestapo as they stalk him through Europe to England. There is no safety for him even at home for England is not yet at war with Germany and diplomatic relations are strained by Germany's claims that he tried to assassinate their leader. With the death of a German spy he must evade even English police.

The story is breathlessly exciting, and its assault upon the ruthless, brutal, far-reaching power of the Gestapo is intriguing. The ending, while provocative, is inconclusive. It leaves only wishful thinking to compensate for the violent emotions which it has aroused. Walter Pidgeon has the force and the personality to carry his dynamic role. Joan Bennett gives a different and most acceptable portrayal of a little Cockney girl who aids him. George Sanders is the unwavering menace, and John Carradine is good as a cruel spy. Roddy MacDowell is a bright new face. He plays a cabin boy who gives the Englishman his first help on a Belgian ship which brings him to England.

"Man Hunt" is a powerful story. Fritz

Lang has directed the tense sequences with great skill, and the film is provocative enough to inspire excited interest.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Very tense

Children, 8 to 12
No; too brutal

MOON OVER MIAMI

Don Ameche, Betty Grable, Robert Cummings, Charlotte Greenwood, Jack Haley, Carole Landis, Cobina Wright Jr., Lynne Roberts, George Lessey, Condos Brothers, Jack Cole and Co. Screen play by Vincent Lawrence and Brown Holmes, adapted from play by Stephen Powys. Lyrics and music by Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger. Dances by Herman Pan. Direction by Walter Lang. 20th Century-Fox.

"Moon Over Miami" is photographed in lovely color, the settings are rich and lavish, there are several glittering dance specialties and tuneful songs, and the cast is a popular one, but to many the general impression will be that it is a somewhat cheap and vulgar show. It tells the story of a gold digging car hop who, when she is disappointed in an inheritance which has dwindled to a paltry \$4,000, decides to go after a rich husband. With her sister as her private secretary and her aunt as her personal maid, she descends upon Miami armed with trunk loads of new clothes. The resort life pictured is the glorified dream of the nouveau riche. Gaiety reigns supreme, and liquor flows as from a fount to stimulate the jaded spirits of the play girls and boys. *Kay* (Betty Grable) hooks her man, but not without confusion in deciding where the gold is hidden. Actually sister insures the family welfare.

While the idea is obviously farcical, it is not elevating. Direction and costuming may be held responsible for the fact that Miss Grable is better cast as the car hop than when she attempts to masquerade as the eligible lady of fortune.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
No

MURDER BY INVITATION

Wallace Ford, Sarah Padden, Marian Marsh, George Guhl, Gavin Gordon, Wallis Clark, Minerva Urecal, J. Arthur Young, Herbert Vigran, Philip Trent, Dave O'Brien, Hazel Keener, Isabel La Mal, Lee Shumway, John Jones, Kay Deslys. Original screen play by George Bricker. Direction by Phil Rosen. Monogram Pictures.

When a movie can satirize a mystery thriller and yet manage to provide real thrills and suspense, it is doing very well. This is a comedy melodrama, the story of an elderly rich spinster whose relatives have brought her to trial for mental incompetency. The court adjudges her sane. She then invites the greedy heirs to visit her for a week and instructs them to arrive at midnight, an unusual request which instills a premonition of danger in each. However, avarice overbalances fear, and they accept.

Then follows a series of murders which a newspaper columnist covers with keen interest. The denouement is exciting and the final scene is absurdly ironical.

It is well directed and well cast. Miss Padden creates a very real and unusual character out of the role of *Aunt Cassie*, whose wealth causes the family friction. Wallace Ford is good as the columnist and *Cassie's* neighbor and elderly suitor (J. Arthur Young) is an excellent foil. For light amusing thrills "Murder by Invitation" may be recommended.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting

THE PARSON OF PANAMINT

Charlie Ruggles, Ellen Drew, Phillip Terry, Joseph Schildkraut, Porter Hall, Henry Kolker, Janet Beecher, Clem Bevans, Frank Puglia. Screen play by Harold Shumate and Asrian Scott based on novel by Peter B. Kyne. Direction by William McGann. Produced by Harry Sherman. Paramount.

Peter B. Kyne's story has the action and locale of the usual Western, but in addition it has real substance. It tells the story of a minister who accepts his first church in a rough mining town. He is young, eager, sincere, without fear and not averse to using his fists to protect the weak. He lives his religion of brotherly love and gives aid and comfort to anyone who seems to need it. Although his sincerity is disarming, the hypocritical rich men finally see him as a menace to their security, especially when he announces that he has sent for a mine inspector because he thinks the mine is unsafe. They take advantage of an accident to bring him to trial for murder, but a friend saves him when he is threatened by a mob, and an accident destroys the mine, proving that greed and evil can ruin all that they have built. Panamint then becomes a ghost town with only memories to haunt it.

Charlie Ruggles has an excellent role and handles it very well. We see him first as an old prospector looking down on the ghost town. He tells a young man the story as the town comes to life. Phillip Terry, a newcomer to the screen, is well chosen for the role of "Parson." He is boyish, manly, sincere and convincing. Ellen Drew and Joseph Schildkraut are well cast. Clem Bevan plays a drunken old scalawag extremely cleverly. It is a good story, capably presented, and far above the usual Western because of its plot.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
No

RAIDERS OF THE DESERT

Richard Arlen, Andy Devine, Linda Hayes, Maria Montez, Lewis Howard, Turhan Bey, Ralf Harolde, Harry Cording, Sig Arne, George Carleto. Direction by John Rawlings. Universal Pictures.

Dick and Andy (Richard Arlen and Andy

Devine) are stowaways on a ship which lands them in Arabia at a model colony run by an American. The local chieftan is against progress and conspires to regain his power. The two adventurers join in the brawls and battles which finally put down the revolt.

With faked Arabian settings and masquerade costumes, this melo-dramatic action comedy simply moves from the American West to another location. The improbable plot is bolstered somewhat by dialogue, but the film will appeal only to credulous fans who are not discriminating.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Waste of time

Children, 8 to 12
No value

SAN ANTONIO ROSE

Jane Frazee, Robert Paige, Lon Chaney, Jr., Eve Arden, Shemp Howard, Richard Lane, Luis Alberni, The Merry Macs. Direction by Charles Lamont. Universal.

What plot this picture can boast merely serves as a handle on which to hang a few songs and dances of the restless jazz type. Two girls take illegal possession of a night club after gangsters have run its proprietor out of town. The show proceeds amidst showering water and the crash of broken crockery until the script writers run out of gags.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
No

SERGEANT YORK

Gary Cooper, Walter Brennan, Joan Leslie, George Tobias, Stanley Ridges, Margaret Wycherly, Ward Bond, Noah Beery, Jr., June Lockhart, Dickie Moore, Clem Bevans, Howard da Silva, Charles Trowbridge, Harvey Stephens, David Bruce, Charles Esmond, Joseph Sawyer. Original screen play by Abem Finkel, Charles Chanley and Howard Kochand, John Huston, based on diary of Sergeant York as edited by Tom Skeyhill. Photography by Sol Polito, A.S.C. Musical Director Leo F. Forbstein. Direction by Howard Hawks. Warner Bros.-First Natl.

Sergeant Alvin York is remembered by Americans as our National Hero of the last World War. He is the man who, almost single handed, brought in one hundred and thirty-two German prisoners, an achievement which won him the Congressional medal as well as highest awards from the Allied Armies. This film is his biography, adapted from his diary and from the Congressional Record, which verified his military exploit. It is a splendid human document, for York's heroism was more than mere bravery. He had neither interest for nor sympathy with the heroics of war and his presence in the military forces came only after a spiritual struggle in which he had to decide whether there is any justification at all for war. While the picture may be called a war film, it arouses no flag waving hysteria. It is an engrossing analysis of the background and

emotions which molded York and of the principles for which men fight, and it is very powerful, dramatically and emotionally.

In presenting the story, the life of the Southern mountaineers in Tennessee is illustrated as graphically as in a documentary film: the wretched, rocky land and the bare living which it yields; the hard, ceaseless labor; the simple pleasures which the isolated inhabitants enjoy; all lighted by natural, spontaneous, homely humor. Many scenes are photographed so as to illuminate man and the soil with rare beauty.

Alvin York, the elder son of a widow, is a shy, likeable, stalwart youth who has his moments of weakness and goes on tearing, shooting sprees. His mother, a deeply religious woman, understands his lapses as his only release from back-breaking and unremunerative toil. When religion comes to him he accepts it as a "sign from Heaven," and from then on it motivates his every action. War and world problems seem far removed and unintelligible to these simple, uneducated folk. When *York's* draft call comes in 1917, he asks exemption on the grounds of being a conscientious objector. His capitulation is intelligently presented. His decision is made unemotionally after he has fought it out with himself intellectually and found that freedom is worth fighting for. His army experience, its final exciting climax in the Argonne, and his triumphant return to America, a World Hero, are thrilling and astonishing, and his refusal to capitalize on his achievements is a deeply moving, inspiring tribute to the man whose life's story has been interpreted on the screen with such fidelity and sincerity.

Gary Cooper's presentation of *York* is the finest in his career. It is a perfect portrait of an unassuming great man. Margaret Wycherly, as *York's* mother, is remarkable. She dominates every scene in which she appears. All in the cast have been carefully chosen and each is excellent. The restraint and skill of the characterizations, the excellent background, the exceptional direction, and the faithful adherence to documentary fact make the film of unusual importance. It is delightfully entertaining and in addition it has a timely, emotional, exciting and thought provoking theme. It is Americana at its best.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Long but good

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS ♦ ♦

John Wayne, Betty Field, Harry Carey, Beulah Bondi, James Barton, Samuel S. Hinds, Marjorie Main, Ward Bond. From the novel by Harold Bell Wright. Directed by Henry Hathaway. Paramount.

Ignorance, superstition and hate in an Ozark Mountain community are dispelled by

the advent of a wise and tolerant stranger who comes there to atone for a sin committed in his youth. This is the spiritual theme of Harold Bell Wright's novel which is once again translated to the screen. The picture is notable for its beautiful technicolor photography and the fine, sincere portrayals of its actors, but in spite of its visual beauty and uplifting theme, the pitiful, warped characters and one horrible, tragic scene make it very somber entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Perhaps interesting

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable

THE STARS LOOK DOWN ♦ ♦

Michael Redgrave, Margaret Lockwood, Emlyn Williams, Nancy Price, Edward Rigby, Cecil Carnay, Olga Lindo, David Markham, Kynaston Reeves. Adapted from the book by A. J. Cronin. Directed by Carol Reed. A Grafton Film produced at St. Margaret's Studios, Middlesex, England. M.-G.-M.

"The Stars Look Down" is a story of working people, of Welsh miners living in drab surroundings and depending upon their meager wages for bare existence. As in all of Cronin's books, the author expounds a challenge for change in social living. In this he protests private ownership of the essential commodities taken from the earth, which he believes should be handled by the government for the benefit of all. To illustrate his point he brings out the selfish greed of individuals who wilfully endanger the lives of their employees for their own profit. Whatever one's own personal opinion on this subject may be, the film is a dramatic masterpiece.

The picture was made in England with settings which are new and interesting for American audiences. The acting is exceptional, each character fitting into the setting as if recruited from the masses—a splendid bit of casting. It is also superbly directed and, as in most European films, it makes no concession to the conventional happy ending. Michael Redgrave is very fine as a miner's son, whose idealistic ambition for education and ultimate social service is temporarily thwarted. Miss Lockwood's interpretation of the selfish woman who complicates his life is exceptional in its restraint and its overtones which make the character more believable and more insidious. Emlyn Williams appears again in the type of role he does so well. The adaptation of the book was made by the author and thus it retains the spirit of his work. The film is unusual and very interesting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Serious and mature

Children, 8 to 12
Too mature

SWEETHEART OF THE CAMPUS ♦ ♦

Ruby Keeler, Ozzie Nelson, Harriet Hilliard, Gordon Oliver, Don Beddoe, Charles Judels, Kathleen Howard, Byron Foulger, George Lessey, Frank Gaby, Leo Watson. The Four Spirits of Rhythm. Screen play by Robert D. Andrews and Edmund Hartmann, based on story by Robert Andrews. Direction by Edward Dmytryk. Columbia Pictures.

With slight plot and unsuccessful attempts at humor, this vehicle for Ruby Keeler and Ozzie Nelson's Band is disappointing. A group of entertainers are forced out of a night club in a college town by an avaricious woman who hopes to gain control of the college and turn it into a girls' seminary. The daughter of one of the professors enrolls the band as students, and they publicize the school sufficiently to attract the three hundred necessary to keep the charter. Ruby Keeler is the one co-ed. By the time the school is saved no one cares much whether it survives or not.

The music will appeal to those who like Ozzie Nelson's type of jazz, but the songs are singularly unappealing, and although Miss Keeler taps, her routines are not particularly novel. The Four Spirits of Rhythm add nothing to the picture. The director does not introduce his characters clearly enough to arouse interest in them, and he also is handicapped by a dull script.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
If not critical

Children, 8 to 12
Harmless

THEY MET IN BOMBAY ♦ ♦

Clark Gable, Rosalind Russell, Peter Lorre, Reginald Owen, Matthew Boulton, Jessie Ralph, Edward Ciannelli, Louis Alberni, Rosina Galli, Jay Novello. Screen play by Edwin Justus Mayer, Anita Loos and Leon Gordon based on a story by John Kafka. Direction by Clarence Brown. Hunt Stromberg Production. M-G-M.

"They Met in Bombay" is an inconsequential action melodrama, another jewel thief opus in which two crooks are pitted against each other in stealing the fabulous "Star of Asia" diamond. It all seems incredibly easy too. Miss Russell as *Any* Von Duren simply gets the Duchess drunk and takes the necklace. Mr. Gable (*Gerald Mel-drick*) has armed himself with a fake jewel which he thoughtfully places around the *Duchess'* neck before he confronts *Any* and demands the real stone. As Scotland Yard immediately recognizes the fraud, the two begin their escape, also without much difficulty, aboard a tramp steamer bound for China. At this point the action becomes more interesting. The atmosphere of the tramp ship with its polyglot crew and double-crossing, villainous captain, gives a certain realistic suspense. In Hong Kong, *Gerald* proves his ingenuity by stealing an army captain's uniform and by a curious twist of fate is shanghaied into action against

the Japanese. This novel setting and the attempt to evacuate missionaries and Chinese civilians from an outpost are the best scenes in the film. *Gerald's* bravery under fire has an amusing side when he is decorated for distinguished bravery. Fate catches up with him again, but regeneration is promised. Perhaps war may provide enough adventure to substitute for his profitable vocation, but it is hard to believe that again wearing the uniform which he once disgraced can entirely remake the gentleman into an asset to society.

Their roles demand little from Mr. Gable and Miss Russell. Peter Lorre is fascinating as the Captain of the tramp steamer, and the numerous oriental extras provide an interesting background. But on the whole the film is not strongly dramatic or really entertaining except in the latter sequences when the plot uses the more novel setting of the Chinese-Japanese war as motivation for heroism.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No value

Children, 8 to 12
No

THREE COCKEYED SAILORS ♦ ♦

Tommy Trinder, Claude Hulbert, Carla Lehmann, Michael Wilding, James Hayter, Jeanne de Casalis, Henry Hewitt, Brian Fitzpatrick, John Laurie, Harold Warrender. Directed by Walter Forde. Ealing Studios, Ltd. (British). United Artist Release.

This is an English made comedy of the present war, the same type of relief from war's serious side which we find in our many pictures of army and navy life. Three sailors get drunk and overstay their shore leave. In their haste to get on board they find themselves on a German raider, and, because the enemy crew is asleep, they take control. It is absurd but amusing slapstick, and it gives an interesting side light on one of the British methods of maintaining morale.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Possibly

TOM, DICK AND HARRY ♦ ♦

Ginger Rogers, Gerode Murphy, Alan Marshall, Burgess Meredith, Joe Cunningham, Jane Seymour, Leonore Lonergan, Vickie Lester, Phil Silvers, Betty Breckenridge. Story and screen play by Paul Jarrico. Direction by Garson Kanin. R. K. O.

From the moment the credits of "Tom, Dick and Harry" are thrown on the screen and crazily jiggle themselves into intelligible information, one is conscious of the fact that one is to see an imaginative and comic film. It tells the story of a naive, romantic telephone operator whose kid sister says she still thinks in adolescent terms, for she still believes in Cinderella. *Janie* can't make up her mind about three suitors, *Tom*, *Dick* and *Harry*, each of whom she promises to marry. After an evening out with each she dreams

what life might be if she could only decide which choice her heart dictates. These fantastic dreams are deliciously clever. Her ultimate choice is kept secret to the final scene. The cast is splendid. Ginger Rogers again wins acting laurels and George Murphy, Alan Marshall and Burgess Meredith as the three suitors, are priceless. Many of the scenes are hilariously funny, and Garson Kanin has directed Mr. Jarrico's clever screen play with whimsical skill. May we introduce you to *Janey*, and to *Tom* and *Dick* and *Harry*? You'll like them.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Yes, with the family

UNDERGROUND ♦ ♦

Philip Dorn, Jeffrey, Lynn, Kaaren Verne, Mona Maris, Peter Whitney, Martin Kosleck, Erwin Kalser, Ilka Gruning, Frank Reicher, Egon Brecher, Ludwig Stossel, Hans Schumm. Screen play by Charles Grayson from a story by Edwin Justus Mayer and Oliver H. P. Garrett. Director of photography, Sid Hiskox, A.S.C. Music by Adolph Deutsch, directed by Leo F. Forbstein. Direction by Vincent Sherman. Warner Bros.-First National.

This is a fictional dramatization of the revolutionary movement within Germany. A band of freedom lovers attempt to counteract the Nazi influence by means of secret radio broadcasts which spread their doctrine and reveal the truth about world events and the evils of Hitler's regime. In the family to which we are introduced all seem to be loyal Nazis. *Kurt* (Jeffrey Lynn) is a soldier invalidated home minus an arm lost at Dunkirk. *Eric* (Philip Dorn) apparently an ardent party member, is employed in a chemical laboratory. Actually he is the

leader of the underground movement secretly engaged in the perilous occupation of broadcasting nightly from unexpected locations, always just ahead of the Gestapo. His success is possible only because of underground party members spotted throughout the Nazi governmental departments who warn when the trail gets hot. *Kurt*, with no suspicion of his brother's activities, is the unwitting cause of his detection, but after seeing the Gestapo in action he takes up the work and insures its continuation.

This is the strongest Anti-Nazi picture yet produced, except possibly the tragic "Pastor Hall," and all the elements of cinematography are combined to achieve the effects. The cast is remarkable. The majority are European born, and the foreign accents, the frequent use of the German language, and the German locale give the film a distinctly realistic atmosphere. Philip Dorn has again a role which gives full play to his talents. Jeffrey Lynn, the one typical American, fits into the scene with unusual adaptability. Kaaren Verne and Mona Maris are excellent.

The drama is highly emotional. There is no humor to lighten the suspense until at times the strain is almost unbearable. It is strong propaganda. Whether it is based on positive fact perhaps the American people will never know, but fact or fiction, there is spiritual significance in the strength displayed by people who, in the face of overwhelming danger, unhesitatingly fight, without thought of compromise, for what they believe is right.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Very strong; not recommended under 14

Children, 8 to 12
Too emotional

SHORT SUBJECTS

THE ALLEY CAT ♦ ♦

M-G-M.-Cartoon.

A slapstick chase of dogs and cats by which a household is disorganized. It is not very funny. Not recommended.

BAGGAGE BUSTER ♦ ♦

Walt Disney. R. K. O.

Goofy investigates some baggage and gets amusingly involved with a magician's props. Original and clever. Family.

THE BATTLE ♦ ♦

Miniature M.-G.-M.

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CANINE CADDY ♦ ♦

Walt Disney. R.K.O.

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FORBIDDEN PASSAGE ♦ ♦

Crime Does Not Pay Series. M-G-M.

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lin Adams, Oscar Levant in being quizzed by Clifton Fadiman. Excellent entertainment. Family.



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Arizona Bound
Bad Men of Missouri
Bowery Blitzkrieg
Charley's Aunt
Cracked Nuts
The Deadly Game
Dive Bomber
Dressed to Kill
Father Steps Out
Father Takes a Wife
Here Comes Mr. Jordan
Here Is a Man
Hold That Ghost
Life Begins for Andy Hardy
The Little Foxes
Manpower
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Parachute Battalion
Ringside Maisie
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Tanks a Million
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The Voice in the Night

SHORT SUBJECTS

The Gay Nineties
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England's Eight Million
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FEATURE FILMS

ARIZONA BOUND ♦ ♦

Buck Jones, Tim McCoy, Raymond Hatton, Luana Walters, Dennis Moore, Kathryn Sheldon, Tris Coffin, Horace Murphy. Screen play by Jess Bowers. Original story by Oliver Drake. Direction by Spencer Bennet. Monogram.

This brings back popular Western actors in a new series to be called "The Rough Riders" in which action predominates and the story is incidental. "Arizona Bound" tells again of the rough, wild days when Wells Fargo stage coaches were held up and drivers killed. Government agents in disguise eventually round up the gang of killers. The scenery and skillful riding are the film's best points, and it comes up to the average standards of the Western, B program picture. The running time is about one hour (57 minutes).

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Matter of taste

BAD MEN OF MISSOURI ♦ ♦

Dennis Morgan, Jane Wyman, Wayne Morris, Arthur Kennedy, Victor Jory, Alan Baxter, Walter Catlett, Howard da Silva. Adapted from a story by Robert E. Kent. Direction by Ray Enright. Warner Bros.

The sentimental fiction which has been woven around Jesse James, the Daltons, and the Younger brothers has almost become folk lore. The fact that their crimes are a

heritage of the Old West makes this possible, although unfortunate, when they are continually glamorized in films. In a recent picture when the Daltons rode again the treatment was a tongue in cheek burlesque of all Westerns and each brother "bit the dust" in an undignified and thoroughly justifiable ending. But in this tale of Missouri, the Youngers receive a generous whitewashing and live to join reputable citizens again. The cast is excellent and the outlaws win sympathy for their Robinhood activities until they murder too freely. The action is fast and furious and holds attention. However the picture is a glorification of murderous banditry and as such is a matter of taste for adults only.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

BOWERY BLITZKRIEG ♦ ♦

Leo Gorcey, Bobby Jordan, Huntz Hall, Keye Luke, Warren Hull, Charlotte Henry, Bobby Stone, Martha Wentworth. Screen play by Sam Robins. Direction by Wallace Fox. Monogram Pictures.

The Dead End Kids again appear in a routine story of adolescent regeneration. This time they are reformed under the kindly guidance of an understanding police officer.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

CHARLEY'S AUNT ♦ ♦

Jack Benny, Kay Francis, James Ellison, Anne Baxter, Edmund Gwenn, Reginald Owen, Laird Cregar, Arleen Whelan, Richard Haydn, Ernest Cossart, Morton Lowry, Lionel Pape. From the comedy by Brandon Thomas. Screen play by George Seaton. Direction by Archie Mayo. 20th Century-Fox.

"Charley's Aunt," the old time comedy which dates from the 1870's, has been revived on the stage this year and has delighted New York audiences by its rollicking fun and charming costumes. The movie version gives Jack Benny such a prominent part that enjoyment of the film depends mainly upon whether or not one likes his style of comedy, which is sometimes broad slapstick verging on vulgarity and sometimes clever impersonation of an eccentric old woman. Settings and costumes are very attractive. The story, it will be recalled, is about the complications which ensue when an Oxford student is persuaded to dress up as a chaperon for two young feminine guests in the absence of *Charley's* aunt from Brazil.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Funny

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

CRACKED NUTS ♦ ♦

Stuart Erwin, Una Merkel, Mischa Auer, William Frawley, Astrid Allwyn, Francis Pierpont, William Wright. Direction by Edward Cline. Universal Pictures.

Possibly this plot might hold interest in a short comedy but it is too light and inane for a feature length film. A patent attorney's office serves as the setting for the love affair of a slogan winner and his girl friend, the stenographer. The unscrupulous attorney and the inventor of a terrifying robot attempt to get the prize money and almost succeed.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Uninteresting

Children, 8 to 12
Not recommended

THE DEADLY GAME ♦ ♦

Charles Farrell, June Lang, John Miljan, Bernadene Hayes, David Clarke, John Dillson, J. Arthur Young, Fred Gierman, Hans Von Morhart. Screen play by Wellyn Totman. Direction by Phil Rosen. Monogram Pictures.

The opening scene in this espionage melodrama is in Germany where two of the Gestapo are receiving a message from America. The scene then flashes to a U-boat in the Atlantic, and thence to a U. S. Government radio station where several operators are trying to decipher a foreign code and attempting to locate the station which is sending the message to Germany. The probable spot having been located, a squad of police is sent to pick up the illegal short wave radio and its users. We then see a trailer on a highway where, obviously, German spies are working against time, but before the police

arrive the cars nose into a deluxe motel and the scent is lost.

The story then follows the activities of the spies, the operations of the government agents, the rescue of a scientist who has a valuable defense appliance, and the romance of his daughter with a secret service operator. Unfortunately the plot is complicated and the direction has not clarified it sufficiently to make it interesting. The menace is threatening but the German agents are too easily duped, and the success of the secret service seems more like wishful thinking than real skill. The cast excite no interest in the roles they play.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No value

Children, 8 to 12
Too confusing

DIVE BOMBER ♦ ♦

Errol Flynn, Fred MacMurray, Ralph Bellamy, Robert Armstrong, Regis Toomey, Allen Jenkins, Craig Stevens, Herbert Anderson, Moroni Olsen, Dennis Moore, Louis Jean Heydt, Cliff Nazarro. Screen play by Frank Wead and Robert Buckner. Direction by Michael Curtis. Warner Bros.-First National.

Although "Dive Bomber" is another film about the training of air pilots, it is an especially interesting one. It differs from those that have preceded it in that it stresses particularly the part played by the medical corps in safeguarding the health and efficiency of fliers. It shows in thrilling detail the laboratory and flight experiments which are used to test a pilot's reactions to extreme altitude, pictures the equipment which is being perfected to combat its ill effects.

Errol Flynn as *Doug Lee*, a flight surgeon, and Ralph Bellamy as *Lance Rogers*, his chief, work together to find a means of preventing "blackout," the dizziness resulting from altitude, which is responsible for many a crackup. Part of their duty is also the periodical examination of pilots to determine their fitness to fly. It is in the latter capacity that they incur the enmity of certain pilots whom they have been forced to ground, and *Lee* is already hated by two of them because he performed an unsuccessful operation on their injured comrade. This angle of the plot is less interesting because it retells the already too familiar story of bickerings and personal feuds and the deplorable insubordination of disgruntled pilots who (in movies) become heroes by flying planes in defiance of orders. Perhaps such incidents are deemed necessary for dramatic interest, but "Dive Bombers" will be remembered less for its story than for the new and interesting information it furnishes on the subject of aviation and for its magnificently beautiful color photography of massed planes, flight maneuvers, airplane carriers, and the North Island Naval base at San Diego.

The picture was filmed under U. S. Naval

supervision with the assistance of Naval Medical and technical experts and of Paul Manz, chief pilot for Warner Brothers.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Long and exhausting

DRESSED TO KILL

Lloyd Nolan, Mary Beth Hughes, Sheila Ryan, William Demarest, Ben Carter, Virginia Brissac, Erwin Kalser, Henry Daniel. Based on the novel by Richard Burke. Screen play by Stanley Rauh and Manning O'Connor. Direction by Eugene Forde. 20th-Century Fox.

Michael Shayne, private detective, solves another murder mystery and thereby earns enough money to be able to set a new date for his repeatedly postponed marriage. The plot is involved but probably not too much so to interest genuine mystery fans. Two killings take place at a dinner party of actors and actresses. In uncovering the motives for the crimes, various stories of love and jealousy and martial infidelity are brought to light. The picture is average B class entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Has too many sordid implications

Children, 8 to 12
No

FATHER STEPS OUT

Frank Albertson, Jed Prouty, Lorna Gray, Frank Faylen, John Dilton, Kathryn Sheldon, Charles Hall, John Maxwell, Mary Field, Tristram Coffin, Paul Maxey, J. Arthur Young, Gene O'Donnell. Original screen play by Joseph West. Direction by Jean Yarbrough. Monogram Pictures.

This story opens with a routine situation, but unexpectedly it takes on life and sparkles with rare and subtle humor. Jed Prouty, as a railroad magnate is being trailed by a reporter. He suddenly disappears and is discovered sojourning with a couple of tramps. This interlude is genuinely delightful, the dialogue is witty, and the episode is refreshingly humorous. It lifts the picture out of the commonplace.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Little interest

FATHER TAKES A WIFE

Adolphe Menjou, Gloria Swanson, John Howard, Desi Arnaz, Helen Broderick, Florence Rice, Neil Hamilton, Grady Sutton. Original screen play by Dorothy and Herbert Fields. Direction by Jack Hively. RKO.

This is a gay and sprightly comedy in which the roles of father and son are reversed when father marries for a second time and son assumes the usual "parental" responsibilities. The villain of the story is a handsome young singer, ably played by Desi Arnaz, who almost disrupts both men's homes when their respective wives become absorbed in furthering his career. The men decide on an ingenious way to distract the women's

interest, but a fortunate circumstance is the actual determining factor.

It is fast moving, entertaining, clean comedy with unusual but not impossible situations. Gloria Swanson is excellent in a role suited to her age. Adolphe Menjou contributes both frank and subtle comedy, and Helen Broderick adds to the fun.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Amusing

Children, 8 to 12
If interested

HERE COMES MR. JORDAN

Robert Montgomery, Evelyn Keyes, Claude Rains, Rita Johnson, Edward Everett Horton, James Gleason, John Emery, Donald MacBride, Don Costello, Halliwell Hobbes, Benny Rubin. Screen play by Sidney Buchman and Seaton I. Miller from the play "Heaven Can Wait" by Harry Segall. Direction by Alexander Hall. Produced by Everett Riskin. Columbia Pictures Corp.

We have had fantasies before, dealing with life after death, and the subject would not on the surface seem to lend itself to humor, but this approach is the essence of comedy. *Joe Pendleton*, a lively pugilist "in the pink" of condition, crashes in his airplane. To his surprise a messenger insists that he is dead and leads him to a plane where a *Mr. Jordan* is checking in his passengers for Heaven. But *Mr. Jordan* does not find *Joe's* name listed. In fact the records show that he has fifty more years to live. *Joe's* irritation over the whole fiasco increases when he learns that his fight manager has had his body cremated and thus he has no form in which to return to earth. However the sympathetic *Mr. Jordan* and the confused *Messenger 7013* agree to find him a new body also "in the pink of condition."

This is only the beginning of the complicated, hilariously funny situations in which the bewildered and restless soul finds himself. Throughout the story *Joe* is himself and looks like himself to the audience, but to those about him he takes on the physical appearance of the man whose body he has assumed. This adds to the confusion of the cast and to our fun. Robert Montgomery is splendid in the role of the confused, irritated rather dumb fighter. Claude Rains as the kindly omniscient *Mr. Jordan* and Edward Everett Horton as *Messenger 7013* are also extremely amusing; but the outstanding comedy is given by Jimmy Gleason as the fight manager who is completely baffled by supernatural hunches he has that the men he meets remind him of someone he knows well.

When *Joe* is at last happily settled for the next fifty years we are glad, but just a little sad too that he will have to forget the *Joe* he was. "Heaven Can Wait," the original title, seems more appropriate than "Here

Comes Mr. Jordan," but after all the title is less important than the substance of a film.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Mature

Children, 8 to 12
Confusing

HERE IS A MAN ◆ ◆

Edward Arnold, Walter Huston, Jane Darwell, Simone Simon, Anne Shirley, Gene Lockhart, H. B. Warner, Frank Conlan, Lindy Wade, George Cleveland, James Craig, John Qualen. From the story "The Devil and Daniel Webster" by Stephen Vincent Benet. Screen play by Dan Totheroh and Stephen Vincent Benet. Direction by William Dieterle. RKO-Radio.

This is a picture which some people will love so much that they will store it away in the treasure house of memory, while others will not understand it or care for it at all. It is a strange blending of the historical and supernatural such as we find in the tales of Washington Irving and Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Stephen Vincent Benet proves himself as great a master in the same field. Perhaps nowhere but in the New England of a hundred years ago, where religion guided the lives and actions of most of the townfolk, was there such a strong belief in a personal Devil that legends of his power still persist to this very day. *Jabez Stone* of this story agrees to sell his soul to "Mr. Scratch" for Hessian gold and seven years of unbounded prosperity. Almost from the first his steadfast, pious wife and mother sense a sinister influence, but he turns from them to drink and gambling and the society of a bewitching little temptress sent to him by the Devil on the night his son is born. Affluence deadens his better nature, and all too soon the seven years come to an end. Then indeed desperate measures are needed, and at his wife's entreaty the great Daniel Webster comes to plead the case of *Jabez* against *Mr. Scratch* before a jury of outlandish cut-throats and traitors recalled from the grave. There in the dead of night the impassioned voice of Daniel Webster rings to the rafters, and his plea for another chance for this man in the one country of the world where freedom is paramount is as stirring in the light of the present as it would have been a hundred years ago.

Needless to say this is all beautifully done. William Dieterle has used a rare delicacy of touch in his direction. Dark tones of photography are used to create an atmosphere of the past, and strange phenomena of storms and fantastic sounds and shapes arouse a sense of the supernatural. The cast is unusually fine. The impersonation of *Mr. Scratch* by Walter Huston makes the figure of evil fearsome yet fascinating. Edward Arnold is deeply human as Daniel Webster, the great American lawyer and the most powerful orator of his time. James

Craig has a difficult role as *Jabez*, which he performs with strength and sincerity, and the abiding faith of Christianity shines through the characters of *Mary* and *Mother Stone*, enacted by Anne Shirley and Jane Darwell. Little Simone Simon is a charming hand-maid of the evil one. So, on through the cast, each individual deserves praise. Those who like only realism should shun this picture, but those who like to give their imaginations free rein will find it a rare experience.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Needs evaluation
of more mature
minds

HOLD THAT GHOST ◆ ◆

Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Richard Carlson, Joan Davis, Mischa Auer, Evelyn Ankers, Marc Lawrence, Shemp Howard, Russel Hicks, William Davidson. Also Ted Lewis and The Andrews Sisters. Original screen play by Robert Lees and Fred Rinaldo. Direction by Arthur Lubin. Universal Pictures.

Abbott and Costello seem to be hitting their stride in the movies. They have left the army and the navy in this opus, and through an absurdly ridiculous coincidence they inherit a tavern on a lonely road. They go to take possession on a dark and stormy night and find the house full of sliding panels, shrouded figures, clutching hands, moving furniture, and other spooky manifestations of the supernatural which seem to concentrate around Costello. It is all really very funny, and the supporting cast is exceptionally good. The Andrews Sisters appear in answer to adolescent demand and Ted Lewis feebly resurrects a couple of old favorites, but they are not concerned with the comedy sequences. The nonsense should meet with ready approval in these trying days.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting

LIFE BEGINS FOR ANDY HARDY ◆ ◆

Lewis Stone, Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, Fay Holden, Ann Rutherford, Sara Haden, Patricia Dane, Ray McDonald. Screen play by Agnes Christine Johnson based on characters created by Aurania Rouverol. Direction by George B. Seitz. M-G-M.

The story in this latest *Andy Hardy* episode has assumed adult proportions. This does not mean that it will not appeal to youthful audiences, but that *Andy's* behavior is less precocious and more mature and therefore more enjoyable. *Andy*, as we recall in "Andy Hardy's Private Secretary", graduated from high school. Here follow his summer experiences in the interval before college days begin. Uncertain whether or not he wants to go to college, he gets the *Judge's* permission to try living in New York on his own. New York is not an easy city to crash

as he finds to his dismay, and he is saddened and disillusioned. However, he displays a strength of character which is heartening and which will insure the continued popularity of this interesting series on family life.

Andy, Judge and Mrs. Hardy, and *Aunt Milly* are as sincere and delightful as ever. *Betsy* (Judy Garland) is still, in *Andy's* mind, the city youngster, but *Betsy* is growing up, and no unsophisticated kid could accomplish what she does to help *Andy*. Patricia Dane, an ex-Follies girl, is beautiful and seductive and plays her role with restraint, which makes it more realistic. A bit role, played by Ray McDonald as a song and dance artist, is poignant and memorable. The direction is excellent. Working with a good script, Mr. Seitz, has kept an interesting pace and has emphasized the high lights with discriminating taste.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
If interested

THE LITTLE FOXES

Bette Davis, Herbert Marshall, Teresa Wright, Richard Carlson, Patricia Collinge, Dan Duryea, Charles Dingle, Carl Benton Reid, Jessie Grayson, John Marriott, Russel Hicks, Lucien Littlefield, Virginia Brissac, Terry Nibert, Henry Thomas, Charles R. Moore. Screen play by Lillian Helman from the play by Lillian Helman. Additional dialogue by Arthur Kober, Dorothy Parker and Alan Campbell. Photography by Gregg Toland. Art by Stephen Goossion. Musical direction by Meredith Willson. Direction by William Wyler. Sam Goldwyn Production. RKO.

There is keen enjoyment to be gleaned from each individual performance in this production, but it is not the superbly competent cast alone that makes "The Little Foxes" one of the best movies of the year, for Miss Hellman's play is such a penetrating study of human behavior that it will may become a literary classic.

The setting is the deep South in the year 1900. The principal characters are the members of the *Hubbard* family who shrewdly distrust one another while they connive to cheat others. *Regina*, ruthless, avaricious, and tyrannical, loathes her invalid husband because he refuses to cooperate in her schemes for financial aggrandizement at the expense of cheap labor; *Ben* and *Oscar*, her two greedy brothers, plot to gain possession of her fortune; *Leo*, her cringing degenerate nephew, steals to further their plans; and *Birdie*, her gentle, aristocratic sister-in-law, is the miserable victim of a sadistic husband. Retribution comes in the end when *Alexandra*, her repressed daughter, rebels and leaves her alone to face the defeat of her schemes and the torture of a guilty conscience.

The play derives its title from "The Song of Solomon" 2-15, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines

have tender grapes." In spite of the fact that it is concerned with truly horrible people, the film is enjoyable because it is a masterly coordination of the best in direction, acting, photography, and setting, as well as a top notch piece of play writing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Very mature but worthwhile

Children, 8 to 12

No

MANPOWER

Edward G. Robinson, Marlene Dietrich, George Raft, Alan Hale, Frank McHugh, Eve Arden, Barton MacLane, Ward Bond, Walter Catlett, Joyce Compton, Lucia Carroll. Original screen play by Richard Macauley and Jerry Wald. Music by Adolph Deutsch. Direction by Raoul Walsh. Warner Bros.-First National.

"Manpower" is a story of two he-men who work for a power company, brothers until death and all that until a woman steps between them. The woman is *Fay Duval*, played by Marlene Dietrich, a sullen, defiant type of beauty, who has been harshly treated in prison cells and shabby dance halls and owes nothing to any man. *Hank McHenry* (Edward G. Robinson) has never had much success with women and when *Fay* agrees to marry him is pitifully grateful. His comrade, *Johnny Marshall* (George Raft) has a fatal attraction for the other sex; therefore, try as they all may to be noble, someone has to get the worst of it. Unlike other films dealing with "trouble shooters," there is none of the thrill of mastery over great natural forces, although there are some terrifying sequences of lightning, flood, and high-tension wires cut loose. The great poles and the steel towers with their titanic currents serve as a background for the story and a means whereby characters whose deaths are important to the plot may meet their ends. The film abounds with the coarse humor of the crew of men who work together, some of it very funny and spontaneous, some of it of the bar-room variety. All in all it is a man's picture, but even so, many men will find too much emphasis on the triangle situation, too little on adventure.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Impossible

Children, 8 to 12
No

MISSING TEN DAYS

Rex Harrison, Karen Verne, C. V. France, Leo Glenn, Joan Marion, Anthony Holles, John Abbott, Robert Rendell, Andre Morell. Direction by Tim Whelan. British (Columbia).

The English have proven themselves adroit in fashioning mystery-thrillers, and "Missing Ten Days" is another of their recent films which is distinguished by excellent acting and a fast moving and entertaining plot. The setting is France during the present war and before the debacle.

An Englishman is shot in a Paris street; recovering consciousness in a hospital he finds that he remembers nothing after an airplane crash which, they tell him, occurred ten days before. The interim is a blank in his mind, but he decides to clear up the mystery. Where he has been, the bewildering, humorous and dangerous situations which have confronted him and his final exciting experiences in preventing sabotage by fifth columnists provide a very entertaining hour. Rex Harrison is an exceptionally fine actor and the cast gives him good support. The European locale adds interest for American audiences, and the story, which is not designed for propaganda, is amusing and dramatic and moves swiftly to an exciting climax.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Yes

Children, 8 to 12

Possibly too complicated



MY LIFE WITH CAROLINE ♦ ♦

Ronald Colman, Anna Lee, Charles Winninger, Reginald Gardiner, Gilbert Roland, Katherine Leslie, Hugh O'Connell, Murray Alper, Matt Moore. Screen play by John Van Druten and Arnold Belgard from play by Nicolai Verneuil and Georges Berr. Musical score by Werner Heymann. Direction by Lewis Milestone. R. K. O.

Caroline, the butterfly wife of *Anthony*, a distinguished publisher whose business periodically calls him away, believes herself in love about every two years with some gallant who has convinced her that she requires a husband who understands her, who needs her, and who is always at hand to devote himself to her. At these psychological moments, a sixth sense warns her husband that he should be at home to circumvent her plans. "This," Ronald Colman tells the audience, "is my life with Caroline."

When the picture opens *Caroline* is about to elope with an attractive Latin from the Argentine. At the airport waiting for their plane, she suddenly has the feeling that "it has all happened before." Ronald Colman assures us that it has, and the plot returns to the last affair when the man in the case is a surrealist artist whose estate in Florida touches theirs.

The picture is novel and gay although it is at times slow, possibly because the denouement is always apparent. However the incidents are amusing, the settings are lovely, the musical score is exceptionally appropriate, and the cast is admirable. Ronald Colman is very attractive, and his role is more suited to his talents than the heavier costume parts in which we have seen him lately. Miss Lee reminds one vaguely at times of Ina Claire and plays the flighty, childish wife with alluring charm. Charles Winninger is delightful as her father, the rascal who does not much care who wins out if only he has a secure berth. Reginald

Gardiner and Gilbert Roland are excellent as the suitors. The script has been adapted from a French trifle, and Lewis Milestone's direction gives it the light sophistication its gossamer content requires.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Mature and with little interest

Children, 8 to 12

Unsuitable



OUR WIFE ♦ ♦

Melvyn Douglas, Ruth Hussey, Ellen Drew, Charles Coburn, John Hubbard, Harvey Stephens, Theresa Harris. Screen play by P. J. Wolfson from the play by Lillian Day and Lyon Mearson. Directed and produced by John Stahl. Columbia.

"Our Husband" would seem to be a more suitable title for this comedy romance than "Our Wife" because it is concerned with a battle of wits between two women for the possession of the ex-husband of one. *Jerry Marvin* (Melvyn Douglas) is separated from his wife (Ellen Drew), and the divorce is to become final in three months. On a drunken spree on shipboard, en route to a new job in the tropics as band leader, he meets an attractive girl who is a well known scientist (Ruth Hussey). Association with her inspires him to straighten up, return to New York, and renew his creative composition work. At this point the wife re-appears and plots to regain her husband's love.

Melvyn Douglas, Miss Hussey and Miss Drew play their roles capably, but the witty lines and the best comedy are given to Charles Coburn and John Hubbard as the father and the brother of the erudite lady. The film is amusing but the situations would have been more pleasing had the two girls been rivals without a marriage to complicate the issue. To have a man propose to a woman in front of his legal wife is a bit distasteful, especially in view of the fact that at that time the wife has not yet appeared in an unsympathetic light.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12

Unsuitable



PARACHUTE BATTALION ♦ ♦

Robert Preston, Edmund O'Brien, Harry Carey, Buddy Ebsen, Paul Kelley, Richard Cromwell, Robert Barrat, Edward Fielding, Erville Alderson, Selmer Jackson, Grant Withers, Nancy Kelley. Original screen play by John Twist and Major Hugh Fite, Air Corps. Direction by Leslie Goodwins. RKO.

Here is an unusually interesting story of army life, based on the training of men in our present army. From the cross roads of life come four types of young men to enlist in the parachute battalion. Each has his own particular problem: one finds himself unfitted for this job; another, a football hero, continues to play to the gallery although it takes more courage than he had anticipated; a country boy meets the situa-

tion with dogged determination; and the son of the Commandant has to overcome an inferiority complex. Under the guidance of an expert instructor and a business-like sergeant, each solves his problem.

The nature of the picture offers vast opportunity for spectacular photography, and the director uses this medium largely to tell his story. The cast is excellent. A love story is a minor angle in a plot which stresses informative details of army training, its psychological effect on the trainees, and the loyalty, friendships and fine morale of our American soldiers.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

RINGSIDE MAISIE

Ann Sothern, George Murphy, Robert Sterling, Virginia O'Brien, Natalie Thompson, Margaret Moffat. Original screen play by Mary C. McCall, Jr. Direction by Edwin L. Marin. Produced by J. Walter Ruben. M-G-M.

While this episode in *Maisie's* career is a bit on the sentimental side, it is less fantastic than some of her other adventures and makes human and appealing entertainment for all except those who don't like prize fight pictures. *Maisie* is at present living with *Mrs. Dolan* and her son *Terry* whose ambition is to own and operate a grocery store, although his friend, *Skeets Maguire*, nearly succeeded in making him heavyweight champion of the world. *Skeets* is a successful fight promoter who seemed extremely hard boiled at first, but who turned out to have a heart of gold. *Maisie*, with her usual humor and common sense, was able to be of great help to the *Dolans* when they were in serious trouble. She and *Skeets* have fallen in love, and it looks as though *Maisie* might soon be *Mrs. Maguire*. It will be interesting to see what is in store for her in the next chapter.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
No

SUN VALLEY SERENADE

Sonja Henie, John Payne, Glenn Miller, Milton Berle, Lynn Bari, Joan Davis, The Nicholas Brothers, William Davidson. Screen play by Robert Ellis and Helen Logan from story by Art Arthur and Robert Harari. Direction by E. Bruce Humberstone. 20th Century-Fox.

This entertaining romance has the beautiful background of Sun Valley for its locale. It is the story of a band, a singer, and a young refugee from Norway. For publicity purposes the band decides to sponsor a refugee, and its pianist signs up as responsible for the child. To the amazement of all, instead of a baby, the refugee is a young and charming girl who at once falls in love with the young man, to his acute embarrassment. She follows the band to Sun Valley

where in an environment in which she outshines the singer, who is her rival, she wins her man.

It is a pleasing story with beautiful photography of skiing and superb skating. Glenn Miller's Band is featured and will attract lovers of swing, and the Nicholas Brothers give one of their unusual and clever exhibitions. Sonja Henie has improved her acting, and John Payne is good.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Should delight

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

TANKS A MILLION

William Tracy, James Gleason, Noah Beery, Jr., Joe Sawyer, Elyse Knox, Douglas Fowley, Knox Manning, Harold Goodwin, William Gould. Original screen play by Paul Gerard Smith. Warren Wilson and Edward E. Seabrook. Direction by Fred Guiol. Hal Roach.

When a draftee gets into trouble because he is too bright, too well versed on army regulations and form, then it's news. This is the usual comedy situation in reverse. Instead of a dumb recruit, *Dodo* is a walking encyclopaedia of all army details, and his incredible memory, trained at an information desk, is a matter of consternation and embarrassment to his superior officers. He even drills perfectly, having practiced with a broom to good effect. William Tracy is ideal as *Dodo*, the exasperating private who gets his sergeant chevrons at once to the rage of *Sergeant Ames* (Joe Sawyer) who earned his the hard way. The higher officers are excellent with Jimmy Gleason as the irritable and emotional visiting general. There isn't much story but the fun is hilarious, and no romance is dragged in.

These short features (running time about 50 minutes) which Hal Roach is making, should prove the answer to the public's prayer for relief from the scourge of double features. "Tanks a Million" is an ideal complement to another feature, the first step toward the return of well balanced movie programs.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good fun

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

TILLIE THE TOILER

Kay Harris, William Tracy, Daphne Pollard, Jack Arnold, Marjorie Reynolds, George Watts, Bennie Bartlett, Stanley Brown, Ernest Truex, Franklin Pangborn, Edward Gargan, Sylvia Field. Screen play by Karen DeWolf and Francis Martin. Based on the comic strip created by Russ Westover. Direction by Sidney Salkow. Columbia Pictures.

Those who are bored by the daily comic strips will certainly not anticipate enjoyment from the materialization of the characters on the screen. But actually *Tillie's* adventures on her first secretarial job are pleasantly amusing entertainment. *Tillie* is not too gifted with brains but she seems to

land on her feet in any situation, and her personal charm for the male sex arouses all the protective instincts which men display toward pretty, helpless creatures. Not that *Tillie* feels helpless. On the contrary! Thus she rescues her employer from bankruptcy in spite of errors which should have spelled his financial ruin.

"Tillie the Toiler" is Kay Harris' first picture. It does not call for much histrionic ability but she fills the role nicely with naive simplicity. William Tracy plays the short and stuffy *Mac*. George Watts (*Simpkins*) and Daphne Pollard (*Mumsy*) also carry on the spirit and suggest the droll appearance of the comic characters of the strip.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

THE VOICE IN THE NIGHT ♦ ♦

Clive Brook, Diana Wynyard, Raymond Huntley, Derek Farr, Joyce Howard, H. Marion-Crawford, John Penrose, Morland Graham, Ronald Squire, Reginald Beckwith. Direction by Anthony Asquith. Two Cities Production. Released by Columbia.

For examples of the kind of propaganda contained in "The Voice in the Night," see Herbert Hoover's collection of World War posters. This picture, like the posters, shows a priest torn from the pulpit and brutally murdered in his own church; a gentle, be-wildered old lady hustled off to prison for innocently breaking the law; a young girl raped by one of the military police; and a courageous intellectual in the enemy country defying death to preserve liberty for his own misguided people. Even the sincerity of the acting by Clive Brook, Diana Wynyard, and other members of the British cast cannot make this sort of picture palatable entertainment, and it is a matter of conjecture whether such efforts defeat or further the cause they espouse.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Impossible

WHISTLING IN THE DARK ♦ ♦

Red Skelton, Conrad Veidt, Ann Rutherford, Virginia Grey, "Rags" Ragland, Henry O'Neil, Eve Arden. Screen play by Robert McGunigle, Harry Clork and Albert Mannheimer, based on play by Laurence Gross and Edward Childs Carpenter. Direction by S. Sylvan Simon. Produced by George Haight. M-G-M.

Do not be afraid, during the first reels, that this is "just another mystery," for the action builds up to a "Wow" ending. It is the story of a radio actor who has a large following for his thrilling murder mystery programs, the plots of which he writes himself. When the leader of an "advanced thought" racket, who wins lonely women through his emotional rituals, wishes to do away with the heir to a huge fortune which will eventually come to the cult, he kidnaps

the radio artist to force him to devise a scheme for a sure, safe murder. Off in the country, at the palatial "Rest Home," *Wally Benton*, his fiancée, and another girl are made to plan this murder, and their adventures are eerie, hilarious and, in the end, very exciting. The denouement is novel and cleverly arranged. Red Skelton is widely known among young people for his radio programs, and he has a personality which registers most favorably on the screen. Conrad Veidt plays the menace with his usual flair, and the supporting cast is excellent. The story is good, the direction swift, and the film is entertaining both for its humor and for its thrills.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting

WIDE OPEN TOWN ♦ ♦

William Boyd, Russell Hayden, Andy Clyde, Evelyn Brent, Victor Jorey, Morris Ankrum, Kenneth Harlan, Bernice Kay. Screen play by Harrison Jacobs and J. Benton Cheney, based on characters created by Clarence Mulford. Direction by Lesley Selander. Produced by Harry Sherman. Paramount.

In this episode, *Hopalong Cassidy* finds that a woman is the boss of a gang, and again he establishes law and order. The photography is superior and the riding very fine. There are more bar room scenes than are usually found in this series, but they motivate the plot, and the film is above average in its class of Westerns.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

WILD GESE CALLING ♦ ♦

Henry Fonda, Joan Bennett, Warren William, Ona Munson, Barton MacLane, Russell Simpson, Iris Adrian, James C. Morton, Paul Sutton, Mary Field. Screen play by Horace McCoy. Direction by John Brahm. 20th Century-Fox.

This is disappointing when one considers the original book and the cast. Stewart Edward White's novel had vivid descriptions of the Alaska coast and the wild, natural beauty of the country. It told the story of a man whose wanderlust was comparable to the migrations of wild geese always winging to new feeding grounds. The film (obviously photographed in the California mountains) is just like any other story of Alaska with its settings of rough saloons, lonely cabins in the woods, and stormy weather; and instead of a man's reaction to the call of the wild, the story is concerned with the complications following a woman's ugly past.

Because *John Murdock* is supposed to meet *Blackie* in Seattle, he leaves his job as lumberjack and goes to the city. *Blackie* is so long in coming that *John* gets another job and has opportunity to meet and marry *Sally* (from a beer hall) before *Blackie* ar-

rives. It develops that *Sally* has been *Blackie's* mistress but this is hidden from *John* until all go to Alaska and *Sally* is about to have a baby. When *John* finds out, there is a fearful scene but all is forgiven when *Blackie* guides a boat through a frightful storm to bring a "bad" girl from the dance hall to act as midwife for *Sally*.

Warren William is always a slick villain, Barton McLabe is a good slugger, but Henry Fonda and Joan Bennett do nothing which any third rate actors could not have done as well. Those who follow stars whatever the vehicle, may enjoy the action but it is uninspired melodrama, stereotyped in plot.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

★ ★ ★

SHORT SUBJECTS

GAY NINETIES ♦ ♦

Disney Short. RKO.

A diverting cartoon in which Minnie and Mickey in costumes of the Gay Nineties visit an old time vaudeville and then take a

ride in an auto. Practically all the Disney characters take part and tunes of the period are well sung.

Family.

MARCH OF TIME No. 12 ♦ ♦

New England's Eight Million Yankees
RKO-Radio.

This is a cross section of life in New England with a close-up of the town of Exeter, showing its famous academy, industries, educational facilities, government, participation in defense activities, etc. This is all very interesting. A series of such pictures on various parts of the U. S. might well serve to create a greater unity.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Good

ROLLING RHYTHM ♦ ♦

Sport Scope. RKO-Pathé.

Shows development of the art of roller skating as exhibited by amateurs and professionals at Radio City. The skill compares favorably with ice skating. Very interesting.

Family.

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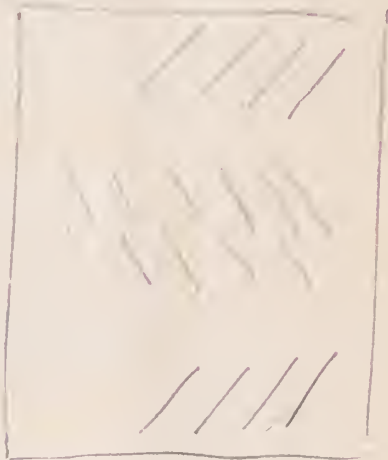
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SEPTEMBER

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FEATURE FILMS

—○—

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Your Last Act

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Vol. XVI

SEPTEMBER, 1941

No. 9

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FEATURE FILMS

BADLANDS OF DAKOTA ♦ ♦

Robert Stack, Ann Rutherford, Richard Dix, Frances Farmer, Brod Crawford, Hugh Herbert, Andy Devine, Fuzzy Knight, Lon Chaney, Jr., Addison Richards. Direction by Alfred E. Green. Universal.

A frontier town in the Dakota Badlands is the setting for this routine western which deals with two brothers and their love for the same woman. *Bob* adapts himself readily to life in the West, but his brother, *Jim*, is unable to forget life as lived in the East. *Jim* is sent East to escort *Bob's* prospective bride, *Anne*, out to Dakota, but *Jim* falls in love with *Anne* and they are married en route. A quarrel develops between the brothers. *Jim* is appointed marshal and has the unpleasant duty of discovering that his brother is a thief. The film is done on rather a grand scale which makes the commonplace plot and uninspired dialogue all the more noticeable. It is also a weak point in the film to introduce a first class actor like Richard Dix in the colorful role of *Wild Bill Hickok* without giving him something to do that might have some bearing on the development of the story. Excitement is created by the usual hard riding and shooting and a frightful Indian raid. Frances Farmer in a "Calamity Jane" type of role is the bright spot in an otherwise dull picture.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Passable, but not
recommended

Children, 8 to 12
No. Some scenes
are terrifying.

BELLE STARR ♦ ♦

Randolph Scott, Gene Tierney, Dana Andrews, John Shepperd, Elizabeth Patterson, Chill Wills, Louise Beavers, Olin Howland. Screen play by Lamar Trotti. Music by Alfred Newman. Direction by Irving Cummings. 20th Century-Fox.

"Legend is the prettiest part of the truth" according to the words of an old negro fieldhand in the prologue. Thus, as in the case of *BILLY THE KID*, two characters whose capture was so important to the state that a price was set on their heads, are glorified in the cinema version of their lives. *Belle Shirley*, descendent of a proud old Southern family, embittered by the murder of her father and the burning of her beautiful ancestral mansion, links her life and fortunes with those of the outlaw, *Sam Starr*, raider of Union supply trains and scourge of the carpetbaggers. Little by little robbers and bandits join their forces and when *Belle* discovers that they are no longer fighting for a high ideal, she is ready to give herself up. Torn between her fears for the safety of her husband and her beliefs, she is killed by a despicable horse thief for the reward.

It is a film of action from beginning to end, and there are many exciting moments. Photographed in Technicolor, the scenes of the mountain country, the old plantation and the bands of soldiers on sleek-coated horses are beautiful. However, the general effect is too much like a dime thriller. The two

main characters fail to arouse a feeling of deep sympathy. While Randolph Scott makes an excellent *Sam Starr* in appearance, at times his acting is too naive to be convincing. Gene Tierney's beauty does not compensate for the unpleasant edge on her Southern accent. Her costumes are planned to enhance her romantic charm rather than to meet the exigencies of her wild career, and some of them are patently absurd. Perhaps there would have been no great loss if the notorious *Starrs* had been left in the dusty records of the past.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Questionable point of view.

Children, 8 to 12
Too violent.

CHARLIE CHAN IN RIO ♦ ♦

Sidney Toler, Mary Beth Hughes, Cobina Wright, Jr., Ted North, Victor Jory, Harold Huber, Sen Yung, Richard Derr, Jacqueline Dalya, Kay Linaker. Screen play by Samuel G. Engel and Lester Ziffren. Based on the character "Charlie Chan" created by Earl Derr Biggers. Direction by Harry Lachman. 20th Century-Fox.

This is a routine murder mystery in which emphasis is placed on solution of the crime rather than in horror. *Charlie Chan* and his irrepressible son *Jimmy* are, as usual, the central figures. Several minor roles are well played, particularly by Victor Jory as a mystic and a cute little Chinese girl who arouses *Jimmy's* romantic interest.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
If they like mystery.
Mature—Family

Children, 8 to 12
No

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE ♦ ♦

Spencer Tracy, Ingrid Bergman, Lana Turner, Donald Crisp, Ian Hunter, Barton MacLane, C. Aubrey Smith. Based on the novel by Robert Louis Stevenson. Screen play by John Lee Mahin. Direction by Victor Fleming. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Even the best of actors may be cast in a part which is below his standard. Spencer Tracy is frankly disappointing to many in this new version of the story which brings the subject matter up to modern times by expressing a dual personality in Freudian terms. The best way to take "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" is still in its original form, the story by Robert Louis Stevenson, which uses the imagination of the reader for its tremendous impact. When this is translated to stage or film, it becomes melodrama, but it is pretty good melodrama, and any attempt to interpret it by psychological inferences detracts from the power and makes it at times a little dull. Most of the acting is good if not inspiring with the exception of the part of *Ivy*; Ingrid Bergman's portrayal of the unfortunate barmaid who falls into the hands of the fiendish *Hyde* is little short of superb.

In the field of production nothing has been spared. The latest developments in photog-

raphy are employed, unusual settings, a splendid musical score, the touch of a great director. Still, when all is said and done, the story of the doctor who discovered a chemical compound to separate the good and evil in his make-up into two separate individuals, has twice appeared to better advantage in earlier cinema versions.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Too much horror

Children, 8 to 12
Decidedly not

DR. KILDARE'S WEDDING DAY ♦ ♦

Lew Ayres, Lionel Barrymore, Laraine Day, Red Skelton, Alma Kruger, Samuel S. Hinds, Nils Asther, Walter Kingsford. Screen play by Willis Goldbeck and Harry Ruskin from a story by Ormond Ruthven and Lawrence P. Bachman. Based upon the characters created by Max Brand. Direction by Harold S. Bucquet. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Dr. Kildare's wedding is tragic because his bride is run down by a truck and fatally injured. Perhaps it was necessary to get Miss Day out of the cast of this series, but it is somewhat of a shock to dispose of the character in this manner. The story is loosely constructed and ends with an anticlimax. The usual clinical cases come in for slight consideration: tone deafness is cleared up summarily by Vitamin B₁; a woman patient is told that she cannot have children because she drinks too much; *Dr. Gillespie* is sent to a sanitarium for a month's rest while a specialist determines whether or not he is afflicted with cancer, a disease which it is generally conceded requires swift diagnosis and treatment if the patient is to survive. All cases are treated casually and without authoritative conclusions. There is a sprinkling of comedy, notably a very funny sequence by Red Skelton when he tries to make a phone call surrounded by baggage in a booth, but it would be more effective in a film which did not contain so many painful and tragic elements.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Mature

Children, 8 to 12
No interest

ELLERY QUEEN AND THE PERFECT CRIME ♦ ♦

Ralph Bellamy, Margaret Lindsay, Charley Grapewin, Spring Byington, H. B. Warner, James Burke, Douglas Dumbrille, John Beal, Linda Hayes, Sidney Blackmer. Music by Lee Zahler. Screen play by Eric Taylor from an original story by Ellery Queen. Direction by James Hogan. Darmour, Inc., Columbia Release.

This murder mystery is less entertaining than other in the *Ellery Queen* series because, since the crime is obvious at the beginning and the master detective is the only one who doesn't know the murderer, there is very little suspense for the audience. A man is murdered and the one suspected of the crime is a former business partner to whom the victim has brought financial ruin. *Ellery*

Queen finally discovers that the suspect is innocent and finds the real murderer. Spring Byington and H. B. Warner are effective in their roles.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Yes, over 14

Children, 8 to 12
No

HOLD BACK THE DAWN ♦ ♦

Charles Boyer, Olivia DeHaviland, Paulette Goddard, Victor Francen, Walter Abel, Curt Bois, Rosemary DeCamp, Eric Feldary, Nestor Paiva, Micheline LeBeau, Billy Lee, Mikhail Rasumny, Mitchell Leisen. Screen play by Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder from a story by Ketti Frings. Musical score by Victor Young. Direction by Mitchell Leisen. Paramount.

Perhaps in every woman's heart lurks the secret, unconscious belief that the worst scoundrel can be reformed by the "right" woman. And thus the sordid reality behind the romantic story in "Hold Back the Dawn" is obscured and softened by the radiant performance of Olivia DeHaviland and the charming interpretation by Charles Boyer.

Georges Iscovescu (Charles Boyer) is introduced by having him relate an experience which happened to him in a miserable Mexican border town, and as the plot unfolds, his voice is heard at times explaining his reactions to the events as they occur. It is an unusual and dramatic method of telling the story of a refugee who contrives a marriage of convenience in order to evade the long wait before his quota number comes up for entrance into the States. The unsavory border town with its mixture of sad immigrants and tawdry Americans, with all its tragedy and viciousness, is realistically pictured, conditions familiar to those who live near the border but perhaps less well known to other Americans. The spirit of the town is retained and also the peaceful, confiding religious sentiment of the Mexicans as shown in a fiesta scene in a village further inland. The excellent photography catches the beauty of the country, the lovely Mexican coast line, the foreign architecture and the primitive occupations and simple pleasures of the natives. It is an interesting background for the story of an unscrupulous man who ruthlessly preys upon the naive and lovely girl only to find that her sincerity and purity has made a return to his unsavory life impossible.

Olivia DeHaviland is exquisite as the young, unsophisticated school teacher. She is so real that her influence upon the man seems actual. Charles Boyer's performance is poised, sensitive and dramatic, and Paulette Goddard plays the evil woman from his past convincingly. Complementary roles are excellently cast and there is a memorable bit by Rosemary DeCamp.

Adults will enjoy the film because of the magic Miss DeHaviland radiates and because the director has told the story with

superlative skill. As with the tale of Cinderella, let us accept the happy ending and not attempt to make it conform with reality.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

LADIES IN RETIREMENT ♦ ♦

Ida Lupino, Louis Hayward, Evelyn Keyes, Elsa Lanchester, Edith Barrett, Isobel Elson, Emma Dunn, Queenie Leonard, Clyde Cook. Screen play by Garrett Fort and Reginald Denham from the play by Reginald Denham and Edward Percy. Direction by Charles Vidor. Photography by George Barnes, A.S.C. Musical score by Ernst Toch. Musical director M. W. Stolf. Columbia Pictures.

This murder melodrama is flawlessly played. It has a macabre theme, eerie and terrifying, but the film version does manage to throw a somewhat sympathetic light of understanding on the murderer.

It is the story of *Ellen Creed* whose love for her two daft sisters causes her to murder her kindly woman employer in order to provide them with a home. When the inevitable trap closes around her she accepts reality and goes out to meet her fate without disturbing her sisters' sense of security. Ida Lupino as *Ellen* gives her most restrained portrayal. She is sinister and yet understandable. The two sisters are stunningly played, two women hovering on the borders of actual insanity. Their behavior in the lovely home is a nightmare of horror to everyone who has to live with them. Their introduction is cleverly contrived. As they drive over the moor with its low hung fog, they talk with the astonished driver and they are bloodcurdling, but amusing too. Their real character is placed at once. Isobel Elson is very fine as *Mrs. Fiske*, and Louis Hayworth at last has a role worthy of his talents. He is excellent as the step-nephew of *Ellen*, a man who discovers the truth but realizes that he cannot make use of the knowledge.

Photography, settings and direction are superlative. The film has much dialogue and many closeups but the story requires this treatment.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Too sinister

Children, 8 to 12
No

LYDIA ♦ ♦

Merle Oberon, Edna May Oliver, Alan Marshall, Joseph Cotten, Hans Yarrow, George Reeves, John Halliday, Sara Allgood, Bill Roy, Frank Conlan. Original story by Julien Duvivier and L. Bush-Fekete. Screen play and dialogue by Ben Hecht and Samuel Hoffenstein. Direction by Julien Duvivier. Associate producer and director of photography Lee Garmes, A.S.C. Producer Alexander Korda. Music by Miklos Rozsa. United Artist.

Those who were fortunate enough to see that rare French film "Carnet de Bal," made by Julien Duvivier some few years ago, will eagerly anticipate his first American

picture. "Lydia" is somewhat patterned after "Carnet de Bal" in technique and story structure. In the former a middle-aged widow, finding an old dance program sets forth to satisfy her curiosity about the men whose names are on it, and the film is rich in humor and character study. In "Lydia," an elderly spinster is invited to come to tea with the men who had loved her in her girlhood. *Lydia* is amused and touched by their loyalty. To her they had been dear friends. Her love had been given to someone else. She decides to clarify their illusions about her and expose the tricks memory has played. As they sit through the gathering evening shadows together they relive her girlhood.

It is a moving story of a young girl's slow growth to emotional maturity. As the scene turns back forty years, we see the gay, immature lovely girl at her first ball; later, the impressionable young woman thrilled by a football hero; again, one moved to compassion by an episode which soon motivates her service to humanity; and then finally, a woman passionately in love. Miss Oberon is at her best in this film which allows her wide range in mood and gives her opportunity to show real character growth. As the older woman she is attractive, self-analyzing, humorously able to laugh at her romantic youth and to acknowledge the futility of her loyalty to a self-created ideal.

The men are excellent! Joseph Cotten, as the reserved and serious physician; Hans Yarrow as the idealistic blind pianist; George Reeves as the exuberant, dashing football hero; and Alan Marshall as *Richard*, the man who unknown to the others actually wins her heart. Edna May Oliver again creates an arresting character in the unconventional and amusing "*Granny*."

The direction is imaginative and penetrating, and in several instances the picture reflects the original and clever technique of Duvivier's French production, notably in the exquisite irony of the contrast between her first ball as Lydia saw it, and the same ball as her escort says it really was. The plot may seem sentimental to men, but women will find it a searching analysis of the many phases of a woman's individuality. The dialogue has a literary quality, and the film has a rare substance seldom caught on the screen. The musical score is a brilliant accompaniment.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Mature but interesting—over 15

Children, 8 to 12
No

NEW WINE ♦ ♦

Ilona Massey, Alan Curtis, Binnie Barnes, Albert Basserman, Billy Gilbert, Sterling Holloway, Richard Carle, John Qualen, Barnett Parker, Sig Arno. Original screen play by Howard Estabrook and Nicholas Jory. Direction by Reinhold Schunzel. Musical direction by Arthur Gurmman. Niklos Rozsa in charge of music. Gloria Pictures. United Artists Release.

"New Wine" is a story of a period in the life of Franz Schubert as it might have been but was not, according to all historical data; even the episode with Beethoven is pure figment of the imagination. According to this tale he flees Vienna to escape military service and falls in love with a Hungarian peasant girl who encourages him in his composing and influences him to dedicate his life to music. No doubt it is difficult to dramatize a creative artist. The character of Schubert does not come to life as effectively as some of the lesser roles, and music lovers may object to the liberties taken in the adaptation of the score, although it does present the more familiar and beautiful compositions, many of them exquisitely played by a full symphony orchestra. On the whole it is a lovely idyll, and the settings of Old Vienna and the pastoral scenes on the Hungarian estate add immeasurably to the visual beauty of the production.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Too mature

PRIVATE NURSE ♦ ♦

Jane Darwell, Brenda Joyce, Sheldon Leonard, Robert Lowery, Ann Todd, Kay Linaker, Frank Sully, Ferike Boros, Claire Du Brey, Leonard Carey. Original screen play by Samuel G. Engel. Direction by David Burton. 20th Century-Fox.

An innocuous rather silly film relating episodes in the lives of two nurses on private duty in the homes of patients. The two, a middle-aged woman and a younger beautiful nurse, sober up a playboy after a gay party, then take another call to care for a child of divorced parents. The home is fabulously luxurious and the father, with whom the child lives, is a gangster so sinister that he is unintentionally almost comic. Before they leave the family is reunited through their efforts. The picture derives a certain amount of appeal from the efforts of the sympathetic nurses to help the little girl who has no playmates and who has never known her mother, but on the whole it is far below average in acting, and the script is unusually poor.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Not worth while

Children, 8 to 12
No

SCATTERGOOD MEETS BROADWAY ◇

Guy Kibbe, Emma Dunn, Joyce Compton, Bradley Page, Frank Jenks, William Henry, Mildred Coles, Paul White, Chester Clute, Carl Stockdale. Story adapted from characters created by Clarence Budington Kelland. Pyramid Production. RKO.

Scattergood Baines helps a young playwright finance a play on Broadway and saves him from swindlers. The plot is unimaginative but the director has carried the weak plot to a smooth conclusion, and the capable cast play their roles naturally. Pleasant humor and *Scattergood's* kindly philosophy make the film entertaining enough.

Adolescent, 12 to 16

Yes

Children, 8 to 12

Possibly too involved to hold interest



THIS WOMAN IS MINE ◇ ◇

Franchot Tone, John Carroll, Walter Brennan, Carol Bruce, Nigel Bruce, Leo G. Carroll, Frank Conroy, Sig Rumann. Based on a story by Gilbert Wolff Gabriel. Direction by Frank Lloyd. Universal.

Since we have been led to expect productions of importance from Frank Lloyd this film is a greater disappointment than it otherwise might be. The plot is based on a novel about men's adventures in the fur trade in the days when John Jacob Astor established the foundation of his vast fortune. His ship sets sail from New York to the frontier state of Oregon, a two years' journey around the Horn, and with the crew go two Scotch fur experts, a young man to represent Astor's interest, and a motley group of French-Canadian voyageurs led by a gay Lothario. But the film is not concerned with men's achievements. It is a silly story of a woman stowaway among this shipload of men, of her misguided love affair and her unsavory influence upon the men around her. The plot is dull and stupid, the dialogue seems amateurish and the humor forced. None of the characters wins interest, although good actors strive to make their roles sympathetic.

Adolescent, 12 to 16

No value

Children, 8 to 12

No value



UNFINISHED BUSINESS ◇ ◇

Irene Dunne, Robert Montgomery, Preston Foster, Eugene Pallette, June Clyde, Ester Dale. Direction by Gregory La Cava. Universal.

There are so many sprightly, funny incidents in this sophisticated comedy and the roles are so well taken that one is likely at the time to overlook the fact that the story is both extremely tawdry and dramatically weak. Toward the end one begins to wonder what the action continues to be all about.

It is the story of a frustrated young woman who has devoted her life to rearing a younger sister. Finally emancipated when

the sister is married, she starts off to New York to "begin to live" and on the train naively loses her heart to a philanderer. Disillusioned she tries to get on with her singing career in New York and ends up by becoming a singing switchboard operator in a night club, where one evening she meets a drunken playboy, brother of the man on the train. The two drink too much and wake up next day to find that they have married. The story from here on is a pretty trite account of their life of forced gaiety, their quarrels, separation, and eventual reconciliation. However Gregory La Cava has made much of the material, particularly the comedy. Eugene Pallette is excellent as the outspoken and unconventional butler, and Walter Catlett does very good work in the amusing role of the night club manager. Irene Dunne is good but oddly tearful when least expected, and her part is incomprehensible at times, considering the type of girl she is supposed to be. Robert Montgomery plays the rich inebriate who shows good breeding in spite of his unfortunate behavior. Preston Foster as the trifling brother makes the part somewhat attractive and sympathetic.

It is lightly entertaining but not satisfying. The script is faulty in being too unreal and there is too much drinking.

Adolescent, 12 to 16

No

Children, 8 to 12

No



WHEN LADIES MEET ◇ ◇

Joan Crawford, Robert Taylor, Greer Garson, Herbert Marshall, Spring Byington, Rafael Storm, Max Willenz. Screen play by Anita Loos and S. K. Lauren. Adapted from the play by Rachael Crothers. Direction by Robert Z. Leonard. M-G-M.

Most good plays which have lasting interest are based on sound human values, and Rachael Crothers' comedy is one of these. It is the story of a woman novelist who falls in love with her publisher, a married man who periodically tires of routine domesticity and indulges in short-lived romances with other women. Another man who is in love with the authoress contrives to have her meet the publisher's wife without letting either know the other's identity. Their liking for each other is immediate and they frankly discuss their problems and philosophies. The situation with its interesting consequences makes excellent drama. Greer Garson makes the wife charming and gracious, a real woman whose understanding of her husband's weakness gives her the more sympathetic role, although Miss Crawford's interpretation of the other woman makes the title "When Ladies Meet" entirely suitable. Robert Taylor has witty lines, and he gives one of his best performances. Spring Byington is highly amusing as the befuddled, kindly friend, and Herbert Marshall is good as the publisher. The film is up-

to-date in treatment. It has a number of new incidents which may or may not please audiences who remember the 1933 version with Ann Harding, Robert Montgomery and Myrna Loy, but Miss Crothers' play has perennial entertainment value and this version is expertly acted and directed.

Adolescent, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable

★ ★ ★

SHORT SUBJECTS

CRAIG WOOK SPORTSCOPE ◇ ◇

RKO.

Excellent demonstration of golf technique. Family.

❖

GHOST TREASURE ◇ ◇

M-G-M "Miniature" Series. Carey Wilson.

The location of a fabulous vein of gold in Death Valley is now unknown, but there are authenticated records of its existence. In 1843 and 1864 it was discovered by men who came to tragic ends; in 1887 by Pete Wilkins who used enough for his own needs and carried the secret to his grave. It is a fascinating short but rather grim for children. Adults.

MARCH OF TIME No. 13, ◇ ◇

PEACE— BY ADOLPH HITLER

RKO.

A concise and accurate resume of the aggressive technique of intrigue and force exercised by Adolph Hitler from Munich to the present day. It clarifies history and points to the immediate danger to America. The material is well edited. The photography, narration and sound effects are excellent. History in the making. For family, 10 years up.

❖

TRUANT OFFICER DONALD ◇ ◇

Disney Cartoon. RKO.

Poor *Donald* in the role of school truant officer rounds up three culprits only to find vacation has begun. Good family fun.

❖

YOUR LAST ACT ◇ ◇

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OCTOBER

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FEATURE FILMS

All That Money Can Buy
Birth of the Blues
Burma Convoy
Buy Me That Town
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You'll Never Get Rich

SHORT SUBJECTS

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FEATURE FILMS

ALL THAT MONEY CAN BUY ♦ ♦

Reviewed in August under title of "Here Is a Man."

BIRTH OF THE BLUES ♦ ♦

Bing Crosby, Mary Martin, Brian Donlevy, Carolyn Lee, Rochester, J. Carrol Naish, Warren Hymer, Horace MacMahon, Ruby Elzy. Direction by Victor Schertzinger, Paramount.

This is the story of pioneering in a new type of jazz. In the early '20s, a band of white musicians introduce negro blues into their programs in New Orleans where these rhythms were considered rather scandalous. The discouraging reception of their efforts is reversed when a lovely girl singer joins the band. The plot is slight but the music is effective. Mary Martin is charming. Bing Crosby gives his usual youthful zest to his role and Rochester has a good scene where he teaches Mary Martin to imitate the native rhythms.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
If interested

BURMA CONVOY ♦ ♦

Charles Bickford, Evelyn Ankers, Frank Albertson, Cecil Kellway, Truman Bradley, Willy Fung, Viola Vaughn, Keye Luke. Direction by Noel Smith. Universal.

In an ill-starred attempt to capitalize on public interest in the Burma Road, now so vital in world's history, the screen writers

wrote a cheap melodrama which might have had any location as its background. It is the story of a man who avenges the death of a younger brother shot because he uncovered a plot to bomb a convoy. Feeble humor and ubiquitous romance add nothing. The picture had timely possibilities which never materialized.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
No

BUY ME THAT TOWN ♦ ♦

Lloyd Nolan, Constance Moore, Albert Dekker, Sheldon Leonard, (Vera Vague) Barbara Allen, Edward Brophy, Warren Hymer, Horace MacMahon, Richard Carle, Rod Cameron, Russell Hicks. Based on a story by Harry A. Gourfain, Murray Boltinoff and Martin Rackin. Screen play by Gordon Kahn. Direction by Eugene Ford. Paramount.

The gangster picture assumes a new trend when a bunch of shady characters buy up a bankrupt town, converting the jail into a hideaway for fugitives and charging a thousand dollars a week for the service. Eventually the gangsters become so interested in running the town that they are changed into decent citizens. While this is improbable, the film is fast-moving with a dash of romance and comedy and offers fair entertainment. Vera Vague as the keeper of a boardinghouse garners the most laughs.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Fair

Children, 8 to 12
Too mature

DUDE COWBOY ♦ ♦

Tim Holt, Marjorie Reynolds, Ray Whitley, Lee White, Louise Currie, Helen Holmes, Eddie Kane, Eddie Dew, Byron Foulger, Tom London, Lloyd Ingraham, Glenn Strange. Screen play by Morton Grant. Direction by David Howard. RKO.

"Dude Cowboy" is an average Western in which an agent of the Government poses as a cowboy to hunt down a counterfeit gang. A familiar plot is aided by good photography of the outdoors, spirited horses, hard riding, a touch of comedy, romance, and mystery. Cowboy songs are pleasing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

DUMBO ♦ ♦

Based on a book by Helen Aberson and Harold Pearl. Screen story by Joe Grant and Dick Huemer. Supervising director Ben Sharpstein. Story direction by Otto Englander. Walt Disney Productions.

Walt Disney has added another lovable portrait to his gallery of animal friends, *Dumbo*, the baby elephant with the preternaturally large ears. From the moment when the storks come zooming down from the skies, going into side-slips and releasing parachutes to carry their precious burdens to the waiting mothers, the picture is full of clever conceits, original variations of theme and irresistible humor. *Dumbo* is the offspring of a trained elephant, and hence this is a circus picture, a circus which for grown-ups has all the thrill of circuses remembered from childhood days, never recaptured in the most elaborate performances of the present time. For children it is particularly pleasing because it specializes on the animals and carries the action behind the scenes so that one comes to know them as friends. It is amazing how real they all become. One's heart aches for little *Dumbo* and for his mother who tries to protect him as any human mother would and is punished unjustly, and one rejoices when they are made happy again. Other strongly limned characters are the little mouse with the "New Yoik" accent, the lady elephants who range from the vitriolic dowager to the timid little woman always afraid she will say the wrong thing, and the black crows dancing and wisecracking like the performers of an old-time vaudeville show. The funny little train chugging through the night, emitting its feelings in its plaintive whistle is a character too.

The colors are striking, circus colors for the most part, exciting reds and yellows and high-pitched blues, except for the opalescent witchery of the bubble-blowing pantomime when *Dumbo* and his mentor, the mouse, get an overdose of champagne by accident, and the pink elephant sequence which follows. The latter is abstract imagery and trick photography run riot, and while it contains

some good satire on modern dance fornic, it is the only part which may weary children, including the grown-up children, as a long digression from the story. The music is in perfect accord with the action and contributes some new numbers to "whistle as you go out."

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Excellent

THE GAY FALCON ♦ ♦

George Sanders, Wendie Barrie, Allen Jenkins, Anne Hunter, Gladys Cooper, Edward Brophy, Arthur Shields, Damian O'Flynn, Turhan Bey, Eddie Dunn, Lucile Gleason, Willy Fung. Screen play by Lynn Root and Frank Preston, from the story by Michael Arlen. Direction by Irving Sawtell. R.K.O.

In the opinion of his fiancée, *The Falcon* (George Sanders) has two irritating faults: his penchant for solving crimes and his un-failing charm for women. He promises to give up his hobby to please her, although a series of jewel robberies at big social functions tempt him greatly. At a large party for the British Relief, a valuable ring is slipped onto his finger during a dance, and a pretty girl attaches herself to him to help unravel the mystery. In spite of the fact that his fiancée unwittingly hampers them, they find the solution of the incident and thus solve the riddle of all the recent robberies.

It is a well worked out, exciting detective story, and the colorful character of the *Falcon* makes it especially interesting and entertaining. George Sanders is a capable actor who creates a suave and attractive amateur sleuth. There are enough comic incidents to relieve any tenseness.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good, if they like
the type

Children, 8 to 12
Confusing

HARMON OF MICHIGAN ♦ ♦

Tom Harmon, Anita Louise, Forest Evanshevski, Oscar O'Shea, Warren Ashe, Stanley Brown, Chester Conklin. Screen play by Howard J. Green. Story by Richard Goldstone, Stanley Rauh, Frederic Frank. Direction by Charles Burton. Columbia.

Harmon, the noted football player has the title role in this picture, but the film is not to be taken as a completely true biography. The story commences when Harmon takes a job after graduation as an assistant coach. His head coach does not like him and he is fired. He tries professional football, then takes a job as assistant coach only to be lured away in the middle of the season by a rival college. There he turns to any method for victory, using dangerous and unethical plays. His quarterback is injured twice. He is brought before the faculty and discharged. Later he again goes as assistant coach to the man who is an idealist as well as a good coach.

The picture, strangely enough, seems to

lack action in spite of football sequences. Its theme is, of course, concern for character building in sports as against commercialized football. A rebuke is flung in passing to loyal alumni who insist upon developing winning teams at any cost. It is constructive entertainment but on the whole dull rather than stimulating.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Yes, if interested
in football

HENRY ALDRICH FOR PRESIDENT ♦ ♦

Jimmy Lydon, June Preisser, Mary Anderson, Charles Smith, John Littel, Dorothy Peterson, Martha O'Driscoll, Rod Cameron, Kenneth Howell, Lucien Littlefield, Irving Bacon, Vaughan Glaser. Original screen play by Val Burton. Direction by Hugh Bennett. Paramount.

Henry Aldrich of the radio has endeared himself to the public because of his adolescent viewpoint about adults and his inability to comprehend their eccentricities. *Henry's* growing pains are really funny. But on the screen we find him brought face to face with actual injustice. The boy who opposes him for President of the Student Body resorts to many underhanded tricks to win the election, and in this he is aided by a teacher who gives his favorite a speech written years before and used by himself on a similar occasion. They repeatedly put *Henry* in the wrong until even his own father believes him guilty of fraud. There are other unsatisfactory points about the film. Not only is reckless driving used for comic effect, but we now have the spectacle of a young boy careening through the air in an out-moded airplane, barely escaping disaster, and it is supposed to be uproariously funny. Safety councils have good reason to shudder at the influence of this picture.

Jimmy Lydon would be an excellent *Henry* if the director had not seen fit to make him actually moronic in some scenes. Many of the young people in the cast are appealing, and there is a spirit of youth and good humor in many of the scenes. All in all, *Henry's* problems and adventures have been handled in a much more sane and kindly manner in radio script than on the screen.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
No

HONKY TONK ♦ ♦

Clark Gable, Lana Turner, Frank Morgan, Claire Trevor, Marjorie Main, Albert Dekker, Henry O'Neill, Chill Wills. Screen play by Marguerite Roberts and John Sanford. Musical score by Franz Waxman. Direction by Jack Conway. M-G-M.

The wicked flourish like a green bay tree in "Honky Tonk," and the audience, to its shame, frankly enjoys the burgeoning. *Candy Johnson* (Clark Gable) narrowly escapes being tarred and feathered in the opening

scene, and there is no valid reason why he should not receive such punishment at the end. He simply has too much charm for the women and too much resourcefulness and bravado for the men. In fact, there are no thoroughly good people among the main characters; even the minister's widow keeps a bottle in the pantry and condones *Candy's* sins, while the angelically fair *Elizabeth* has enough of her father's weaknesses to enjoy the luxury her husband pours at her feet without inquiring too closely into its origin.

Candy Johnson is a card sharper, run out of one town after another in the early West until he reaches Yellow Creek, Nevada, and decides to become a big enough "crook, liar and thief" to master the town. He is married, somewhat to his amazement, by a young lady from Boston (Lana Turner), while an almost equally beautiful dance hall hostess (Claire Trevor) languishes for him all of her days. A jarring note is *Elizabeth's* father, old "Judge" Cotton, who rises above his unsavory past, and like a prophet crying in the wilderness, brings *Candy* and the audience to a realization of iniquity. This is one of the finest parts Morgan has ever played. Clark Gable is, of course, unequalled as a fascinating sinner, and Lana Turner is a luscious blonde type, the last word in feminine fashion of the time. The film is unusually well cast with Marjorie Main scoring decisively in a minor part; her dry comments are irresistible.

The picture of life in a Nevada boom town is a vivid one, particularly the Victorian pomp and elegance of the *Johnson* mansion in the days when *Candy* is hob-nobbing with governors. It would accentuate the historical interest if there were some description of the mining activities which brought abundant wealth to the community.

"Honky Tonk" is a vigorous production, reviving a phase of the old West, careless of life and morals, calling a spade a spade. It is not the sort of thing one would recommend for young people, but many adults will take it with a large dash of salt and enjoy it.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
Impossible

INTERNATIONAL LADY ♦ ♦

George Brent, Basil Rathbone, Ilona Massey, Gene Lockhart, George Zucco, Francis Pierlot, Martin Kosleck, Charles D. Brown, Marjorie Gateson, Leland Hodgson, Clayton Moore, Gordon DeMain, Frederic Worlock. Screen play by Howard Estabrook from an original story by E. Lloyd Sheldon and Jack Dewitt. Photography by Hal Mohr. Musical director, Lud Gluskin with score by Lucien Morawek. Direction by Tim Whelan. Edward Small Production. United Artists.

This is a story of enemy sabotage during the present war. Destruction of convoys carrying munitions from the States, and acci-

dents to bombers enroute to England point to leakage of information on military secrets. A Scotland Yard inspector and an F. B. I. agent working on the case suspect a lovely woman singer who, they are sure, indicates dates of sailings and plane departures through special phrasing of her songs over the air. We are not long in doubt of her complicity, and the action shifts from England to the United States where the two agents, humorously differing on details, work together to determine the leaders of the espionage while the F. B. I. strives to decode the hidden messages.

It is an interesting plot. The cast is distinguished and each member gives an excellent performance. Ilona Massey looks extremely pretty and sings beautifully. The direction keeps the action swift and exciting. The picture is an unusually good spy melodrama.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good of its kind

Children, 8 to 12
Very tense and possibly alarming

IT STARTED WITH EVE

Deanna Durbin, Charles Laughton, Robert Cummings, Margaret Tallichet, Guy Kibbee, Charles Coleman, Walter Catlett. Screen play by Norman Krasna and Leo Townsend from an original by Hans Kraly. Photography by Rudolph Mate. Direction by Henry Koster. Produced by Joe Pasternak. Universal.

The names of Deanna Durbin, Charles Laughton and Robert Cummings assure good acting, and those of Joe Pasternak and Henry Koster as producer and director promise gay and delightful entertainment. The picture does not disappoint. It is a sprightly comedy. A sick old man begs to see his son's recently acquired fiancée before he dies. Believing that he has only a few minutes in which to gratify his father's whim, the son searches frantically to locate her, but is unsuccessful. He then hires a hat check girl to substitute, and the eccentric gentleman is so pleased with the girl that he promptly recovers and, divining the hoax, settles matters to suit himself. One scene is very slapstick and could have been modified to advantage, but the relationship between the wealthy old eccentric and the girl is made touching and very real. Deanna's singing is an integral part of the plot, and, with simple piano accompaniment, it is beautiful and effective.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good entertainment

Children, 8 to 12
No objection

LADY BE GOOD

Eleanor Powell, Ann Sothern, Lionel Barrymore, John Carroll, Red Skelton, The Berry Brothers. Based on a story by Jack McGowan. Screen play by Jack McGowan, Kay Van Riper, John McClain. Direction by Norman Z. McLeod. Musical direction by Georgis Stoll. M-G-M.

"Lady Be Good" is lacking in the first re-

quirement of a worth-while picture plot. It has a pattern which repeats itself twice and might, one feels, go on ad infinitum. Man pursues girl, succeeds with her help, marries, stops working, finds himself divorced. Much padding and many embellishments are necessary to round out the footage, some good and some tiresome and some badly timed, as for instance, Eleanor Powell's clever dancing, which is shown at the end when almost everyone has reached a stage of exhaustion. Ann Sothern and Robert Young's comedy ebbs and flows, reaching its height in a scene when Ann as *Dixie* completely forgets they are divorced. Red Skelton is a born comedian, and his spontaneous fun adds a great deal to the picture; also Virginia O'Brien scores in her eccentric song renditions. It is mainly the music which serves to hold the picture together, and the haunting melodies of "Lady Be Good" and "The Last Time I Saw Paris" are perhaps the pleasantest part of a prolonged and frivolous affair. Ann Sothern's singing of the latter melody is beautifully done.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Light but very farcical treatment of marriage

Children, 8 to 12
Too mature

LADY SCARFACE

Dennis O'Keefe, Judith Anderson, Frances Neal, Mildred Coles, Eric Blore, Damian O'Flynn, Andrew Tombes, Marion Martin, Rand Brooks, Arthur Shields, Lee Bonnell. Direction by Frank Woodruff. RKO-Radio Pictures, Inc.

The introduction of a woman as leader of a gang does not provide sufficient originality to set this apart from the average gangster film. While Judith Anderson is good, there is nothing in the role of *Slade* which permits her to achieve distinction. Some warmth of interest is aroused by the romance between the detective and the girl photographer on the case, and by the troubles of two young honeymooners who are innocently involved in the pay-off. In regard to morals, it must be admitted that the standards are good; there is no sympathy or admiration for the criminals. However, the virtues of the film are mainly negative, and the general effect is commonplace.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No value

Children, 8 to 12
Too mature

LOOK WHO'S LAUGHING

Edgar Bergen, Charlie McCarthy, Jim Jordan, Marian Jordan, Lucille Ball, Lee Bonnell, Dorothy Lovett, Harold Peary, Isabel Randolph, Walter Baldwin, Neil Hamilton, Charles Halton, Harlow Wilcox, Jed Prouty. Screen play by James V. Kern. Produced and directed by Allan Dwan, RKO.

To attend "Look Who's Laughing" is like being taken on a very special trip to a radio broadcasting station where one is lucky

enough to see two programs, for Fibber McGee and Mollie and all the personalities of "Wishful Vista" are here, as well as Bergen and Charley McCarthy. Bergen gives us a treat not easily forgotten by introducing us to Ophelia, a startling new personality.

The action is slow and unexciting, but the film has many entertaining features in tune with what we hear over the air. It is fun to see the characters whose voices and personalities are so familiar. It is fun to see Charlie fuming and fussing at finding himself marooned in "Wishful Vista" while Bergen tries to help Fibber on a real estate deal. Fibber goes off on tangents as usual, even getting excited over the possibility of running for Mayor—"or even Governor—or President," but Mollie puts a quietus on the White House ambition by her question, "Who would be interested in My Day?" Mollie even gets the better of Charlie when she fools him with her "little girl" voice. You will like Mollie and Fibber. You will laugh at Gildersleeve and Mrs. Uppington. And as for Charlie, well, who doesn't like that rascal?

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

MAN AT LARGE

Marjorie Weaver, George Reeves, Richard Derr, Steve Geray, Milton Parsons, Spencer Charters, Lucien Littlefield. Original screen play by John Larkin. Direction by Eugene Forde. 20th Century-Fox.

It is hard to say that any spy story is improbable in these days of Fifth Columnists, but this film certainly is unusually melodramatic and hard to follow. A girl reporter gets herself into a tangle with Nazi spies, English secret service agents, and the F. B. I. She tracks one man to Canada, falls in love with another, and alternately helps and obstructs the efforts of the F. B. I. to apprehend a wanted Fifth Columnist. The film would be more entertaining if the girl were not so exasperatingly scatterbrained. As it is the exciting action and the current interest of the theme will appeal to a not too demanding public.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Passable but a waste of time

Children, 8 to 12
No, confusing and too exciting

THE MEXICAN SPITFIRE'S BABY

Lupe Velez, Leon Errol, Buddy Rogers, Zasu Pitts, Elizabeth Risdon, Fritz Feld, Marion Martin. Direction by Leslie Goodwins. Musical direction by C. Bakalainikoff. RKO-Radio.

This sequel to a film made two years ago relates more adventures of the *Mexican Spitfire* and *Uncle Matt*. Lupe Velez is so loud-mouthed and feature-twisted in her tantrums that she should be toned down for her own good and that of the public, but Leon Errol's

fans will find him funnier than ever. As a "drunk" he is always ludicrous without being offensive, and he is so silly that it is doubtful if he ever sets a bad example. Again he chases himself around the premises in the dual role of *Uncle Matt* and *Lord Epping*. Zasu Pitts and Elizabeth Risdon add to the comedy. The incentive for all the activity is a war orphan adopted by *Uncle Matt* for his nephew *Dennis*; when she arrives, she proves to be a full-grown delectable blonde. The picture is definitely Class B, but not bad for out-and-out farce.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Possible but rather cheap

Children, 8 to 12
No, because of jealousy theme

NEW YORK TOWN

Fred MacMurray, Mary Martin, Robert Preston, Akim Tamiroff, Eric Blore, Fuzzy Knight, Cecil Kellaway, Ken Carpenter. Direction by Charles Vidor, Paramount.

The story is an old one of the poor but happy-go-lucky boy who, thoroughly at home in New York, attempts to show a disillusioned, jobless girl how to get along. He suggests that she marry for money, but when she acquiesces, he does not like the idea so well. Of course, they marry and get along on love and poverty.

It is not a strong picture because it is not successful in building up the theme of drama and heartbreak in a great city. Its failure to make the most of this theme may be due to the fact that most of the characters are superfluous "atmosphere." However, the story has enough interest, and the roles are well enough played to fill the requirements of a B class picture on a double bill.

Entertaining

Little interest

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

Bob Hope, Paulette Goddard, Edward Arnold, Leif Erickson, Helen Vinson, Willie Best, Glenn Anders, Grant Mitchell, Catherine Doucet, Rose Hobart, Mary Forbes, Clarence Kolb, Leon Belasco, Helen Millard. Screen play by Don Hartman from the play by James Montgomery and the novel by Frederic S. Isham. Direction by Elliott Nugent. Paramount.

Somehow this version of the old farce does not seem so hilarious as it did on the stage years ago, but it is neatly tailored to Bob Hope's style and will please his followers. The opening scenes could be revised to advantage but when the theme is introduced, events move swiftly and coherently. It is the old story of the man who believes that it is possible to tell the absolute truth on all occasions and bets a girl's money to that effect. Thus it is essential that he win his bet. His business associates who feel that his blunt honesty is dangerous to their policy follow him about and try to catch him by placing him in awkward situations. The pro-

duction is elaborately staged and the cast is good. A little more subtlety would have made the picture funnier but Bob Hope is amusing, and the slapstick situations will entertain the general audience. It is light diversion, too light to be considered seriously from an ethical standpoint, but it nevertheless is a let down to have the hero lie valiantly after the game is up in order to clear himself socially and to get in well again with his business partners.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Probably harmless
and entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
No

ONE FOOT IN HEAVEN ♦ ♦

Frederic March, Martha Scott, Beulah Bondi, Gene Lockhart, Elizabeth Fraser, Harry Davenport, Laura Hope Crews, Grant Mitchell, Moroni Olsen, Frankie Thomas, Jerome Cowan, Ernest Cossart, Nana Bryant, Carlotta Jelm, Peter Caldwell, Casey Johnson. Screen play by Casey Robinson from the book by Hartzell Spence. Music by Max Steiner. Musical director, Leo Forbstein. Direction by Irving Rapper. First National-Warner Bros.

Hartzell Spence wrote a warmly human biography of his father, William Spence, a Methodist minister, and Casey Robinson, with the approval and technical assistance of representative clergymen, has adapted this record for the screen. The film is rich in respectful humor, deep humanness and inspiration. It is the story of a young man who gives up a promising medical career for the low pay and exacting demands of a minister's life. With his bride he leaves Canada for a small parish in Iowa and the two, with their growing family, meet the varying problems which arise as they move gradually into wider fields with larger churches and wealthier parishioners.

For purposes of drama the emphasis may seem to be laid on the obstacles which hamper the work of the Church, petty injustices and politics, but the incidents weave a pattern of fortitude and forbearance. It is a beautiful story of Christian faith. It also demonstrates the gradually widening attitude in human relations which has developed in the past fifty years toward the current ideal of the Church as a social as well as spiritual center for young people. Frederic March and Martha Scott are ideally cast as the minister and his devoted wife. It is an enriching experience to see them meet their increasing responsibilities. A saving gift of humor lightens their very human exasperation over the pettiness with which they contend, and their guidance of their children, who rebel against being required to set an example of unworldly living, is tolerant and wise. The minister's ever deepening spiritual belief is moving and inspirational. Irving

Rapport has handled the capable cast with rare sympathy, and the film is significant because it is a notable picture of the American way of life.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Excellent

RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE ♦ ♦

George Montgomery, Mary Howard, Robert Barrat, Lynne Roberts, Kane Richmond, Patsy Patterson, Richard Lane, Oscar O'Shea, James Gillette, Frank McGrath. Based on novel by Zane Grey. Direction by James Tinling. 20th Century-Fox.

This adaptation of Zane Gray's novel leaves only the shell of the original story. What remains is a stereotyped Western plot about a lone woman rancher aided in protecting her property rights by a young and stalwart Texan who has ridden into the community in search of a long missing niece. The action, violent and exciting, includes a cattle stampede, and in the end all those who deserve to die meet their just fates. The Arizona location has been selected for its natural beauty and it is superbly photographed. The every-day activities of ranch life also add interest. It is no epic, but good Western fare.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting

SAILORS ON LEAVE ♦ ♦

William Lundigan, Shirley Ross, Chick Chandler, Ruth Donnelly, Mae Clarke, Cliff Nazarro, Tom Kennedy, Mary Ainslee. Original story by Herbert Dalmás. Screen play by Art Arthur and Malcolm Stuart Boylan. Republic Pictures.

"Sailors on Leave" is a slap-stick farce reminiscent of the days when seeing pictures move on a screen was sufficient entertainment for a wonderstruck audience. The plot, if it deserves the name, has to do with the efforts of a crowd of sailors to marry off one of their shipmates. The shipmate tries to thwart them by pretending to woo a night club singer while in reality he is being as insulting as possible to her in the hope that she will turn him down. Several fairly good songs are sung by the men, but they are not enough to compensate for the dullness of the picture as a whole. The cast is capable of furnishing much better entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too cheap and
uninteresting

Children, 8 to 12
No

SING ANOTHER CHORUS ♦ ♦

Johnny Downs, Jane Frazee, Mischa Auer, Walter Catlett, Sunnie O'Dea, Iris Adrian, George Barbier, Joe Brown, Jr., Rosario and Antonio, the Peters Brothers, Charles Lane, Ed Kane. Direction by Charles Lamont. Universal Pictures.

This is a light musicale in which the story is often lost in the staging of an amateur show. It features a fashion parade put on

by a group of amateurs. The show is so successful that the group moves on to Broadway. The costumes are pretty, dances good and the tunes catchy. Its chief asset is youthful gaiety.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
Little interest

SUNDOWN ♦ ♦

Gene Libney, Bruce Cabot, Harry Carey, Reginald Gardiner, Marc Lawrence, George Sanders, Joseph Calleia, Carl Esmond, Sir Cedric Hardwick. Adapted from Saturday Evening Post story by Barre Lyndon. Direction by Henry Hathaway. Walter Wanger Production. United Artists.

Joseph Calleia, as an Italian student of world trends, explains the factual background, the purpose, behind the drama "Sundown." If the spectator misses this explanation, he has overlooked all that makes the picture important. The film, a romantic action film, can only slightly touch on the arresting facts of African Colonial policies, the paternalistic moral approach of the English governors versus the infiltrating militaristic influences of the Nazi Government whose objective is the control of the continent to establish bases for world dominion.

The equatorial plateau of the Kenya Colony in Central East Africa has been recreated by locations which are exotic and unusual. The negroes used in native roles are a distinct type, and the action is necessarily melodramatic. Abrupt cutting makes the continuity jumpy at times, and the dialogue fails to sustain a high standard of excellence. Joseph Calleia gives an outstanding performance, and Carl Esmond is an interesting newcomer to the American screen. The others are entirely capable, but the action and settings give a Hollywood atmosphere to a plot which has distinctly topical interest for anyone who understands the supreme significance of the vital struggle now in progress for control of the vast African continent.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting action

TEXAS ♦ ♦

William Holden, Glenn Ford, Claire Trevor, George Bancroft, Edgar Buchanan, Don Beddoe, Andrew Tombes, Addison Richards, Edmund MacDonald, Joseph Crehan, William Robertson, Patrick Moriarty, Edmund Cobb. Screen play by Horace McCoy, Lewis Meltzer and Michael Blankfort from story by Michael Blankfort and Lewis Meltzer. Direction of photography by George Meehan. Produced by Samuel Bischoff. Direction by George Marshall. Columbia.

The unusual interest of this Western purporting to depict the lawless days of Texas immediately following the Civil War (1866), lies not in the story, which follows more or less the time-worn pattern of cattle rustling, bad men and down-trodden ranchers, but

rather in a clear picture of people who are distinctly not stereotyped. The plot is less important than the incidental action which dramatizes the individuals and makes them human. As a vital picture of Texas history it is not a significant contribution, but the settings arouse interest in the state's topography, and the use of a large herd of long-horned cattle from Mexico gives an authentic touch because these animals seldom are seen today.

Dan (William Holden) and *Tod* (Glenn Ford) play two ex-Confederate soldiers who have been hard hit by the post-war depression in the South. Both boys are likable and they are devoted friends, but they soon discover that their ethical standards sharply diverge. *Doc Thorpe* (Edgar Buchanan) is a uniquely interesting character who contributes clever and hilarious comedy as well as dramatic menace to the plot. George Marshall's direction gives a feeling of reality to the story of lawless brutality which in less capable hands might easily have turned into just another action film, and the characters and the comedy are so out of the ordinary that the film is removed from the routine class and offers entertainment that is diverting and different.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Violent but ethically sound

TWO LATINOS FROM MANHATTAN ♦ ♦

Joan Davis, Jinx Falkenburg, Joan Woodbury, Fortunio Bonanova, Don Beddoe, Marquita Madero, Carmen Morales, Lloyd Bridges, Sig Arno, Boyd Davis. Direction by Charles Barton. Columbia.

This very light musical comedy is amusing for the moment. A publicity agent (Joan Davis) is forced to substitute her lovely but unknown roommates for a famous Cuban dancing team who fail to show up at a night club. The girls are successful, but complications tinged with mild mystery arise when the others appear. The action and comedy hold attention, and the South American rhythms are topical in interest.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Will entertain

Children, 8 to 12
If interested

UNEXPECTED UNCLE ♦ ♦

Anne Shirley, James Craig, Charles Coburn, Ernest Truex, Renee Haal, Astrid Allwyn, Jed Prouty. Screen play by Delmar Daves and Noel Langley from the novel by Eric Hatch. Music by Anthony Collins. Direction by Peter Godfrey. RKO-Radio.

A fairly amusing if not very probable pot-boiler employs the Cinderella theme, with a fictitious uncle substituting for the fairy-godmother. Charles Coburn plays the role of a Quixotic old gentleman who lives in a trailer camp and allows himself to become involved in other people's affairs; his characterization

is the best part of the show. As *Uncle Seton* he supplies the "family background," permitting a pretty shop-girl to pursue a rich playboy through the shore and country clubs of Palm Beach to his ancestral domain, with the surprising result of converting him to a better way of life. There is rather too much drinking and there are some questionable quips.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Misleading ideas

Children, 8 to 12
No

WEEK-END IN HAVANA ♦ ♦

Alice Faye, Carmen Miranda, John Payne, Caesar Romero, Cobina Wright, Jr., George Barbier, Sheldon Leonard, Leonid Kinsky, Cris-Pin Martin, Billy Gilbert. Original screen play by Carl Tanberg and Darrell Ware. Direction by Walter Lang. Musical direction by Alfred Newman. 20th Century-Fox.

Technicolor, music and dancing, romantic settings, and a lightly amusing plot are nicely combined to make this gay bit of entertainment. A ship goes aground on its way to Havana. Among the passengers is a New York shopgirl, who manages to make the steamship company recompense her with a free vacation in Havana. A young man representing the company decides that it is his duty to see that she is well entertained. Good characterizations add to the interest of the picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Sophisticate

Children, 8 to 12
No

A YANK IN THE R. A. F. ♦ ♦

Tyrone Power, Betty Grable, John Sutton, Reginald Gardiner, Donald Stuart, Morton Lowery, Ralph Byrd, Richard Fraser, Denis Green. Original story by Melville Crossman. Screen play by Darrell Ware and Karl Tunberg. Musical direction by Alfred Newman. Photography directed by Leon Shamroy, A.S.C. Direction by Henry King. Dar-ryl F. Zanuck producer. 20th Century-Fox.

A brash American aviator joins the R. A. F. more for excitement than because he is stirred by a feeling of responsibility. The fine dignity and sportsmanship of the English air force, and the tragedy of the war finally impress the young man, and while socially he seems as irresponsible as ever, his skill as a flyer and his respect for his companions make him more likable as a man. While war forms its background, this story still has much comedy. The flying scenes, taken in England, are superb, and the evacuation of Dunkirk has been reproduced in a realistic and thrilling manner, not overpowering nor too prolonged. The picture is excellent entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes over 14

Children, 8 to 12
No

YOU'LL NEVER GET RICH ♦ ♦

Fred Astaire Rita Hayworth, John Hubbard, Robert Benchley, Osa Massen, Frieda Inescort, Guinn Williams, Donald MacBride, Cliff Nazarro, Marjorie Gatenon, Ann Shoemaker, Boyd Davis. Original screen play by Michael Fessier and Ernest Pagano. Songs by Cole Porter. Musical director, M. W. Stolfoff. Direction by Sidney Lanfield. Columbia Pictures.

This plot is very light, as in most musical comedies, but sufficient to get the hero, a dance director for a Broadway producer, into such hot water that he prefers to enlist in the army rather than to face the complications caused by his employer's incurable habit of philandering with the chorines. In the army his inability to adjust himself to the strict discipline keeps him in the guard house most of the time.

Rita Hayworth, Fred Astaire's new dancing partner, dances beautifully and is lovely to look at. Although the production lacks the glamorous sets which added so much to the pictures in which Ginger Rogers co-starred with Astaire, and the Cole Porter songs are not so tuneful as some he has written, the several ensembles are excellent, and Fred Astaire does a number of spectacular solo routines which are "tops." Robert Benchley is clever as usual in his somewhat sophisticated comedy, the army scenes are hilarious, and Cliff Nazarro's double talk adds to the fun.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Matter of taste

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NOVEMBER

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FEATURE FILMS

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You Belong to Me

SHORT SUBJECT

Thumbs Up, Texas

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FEATURE FILMS

APPOINTMENT FOR LOVE ♦ ♦

Charles Boyer, Margaret Sullivan, Rita Johnson, Ruth Terry, Eugene Pallette, Reginald Denny, Cecil Kellaway, J. M. Kerrigan, Roman Bohnen, Gus Schilling, Virginia Brissac, Mary Gordon. Screen play by Bruce Manning and Felix Jackson from original story, "Heartbeat" by Ladislaus Bus-Fekete. Direction by William A. Seiter. Produced by Bruce Manning. Universal Pictures.

Here we have a clever romantic comedy which stirs up a social problem for audience amusement. It is particularly the story of a woman physician who thinks that marriage need not interfere with her professional life. But it also deals with her husband, a super sophisticate, who has to bury his past, and marital adjustments are difficult. The situations are deliciously comic and the characters entirely human and attractive.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
 Too sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12
 No

BIRTH OF THE BLUES ♦ ♦

Bing Crosby, Mary Martin, Brian Donlevy, Carolyn Lee, Rochester, J. Carrol Naish, Warren Hymer, Horace MacNahon, Ruby Elzy. Direction Victor Schertzinger. Paramount.

This is the story of the pioneering of a new type of jazz. In the early twenties a band of white musicians introduces negro blues into their programs in New Orleans where these rhythms are considered slightly scandalous. The discouraging reception of

their efforts is reversed when a lovely girl singer joins the band.

The plot is slight, but the music is effective. Mary Martin is charming. Bing Crosby gives his usual youthful zest to his role, and Rochester has a good scene where he teaches Mary Martin to imitate the native rhythms.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
 Good

Children, 8 to 12
 If interested

THE CHOCOLATE SOLDIER ♦ ♦

Nelson Eddy, Rise Stevens, Nigel Bruce, Florence Bates, Dorothy Gilmore, Nydia Westman, Max Barwyn, Charles Judels. Based on Ferenc Molnar's "The Guardsman." With music and lyrics from "The Chocolate Soldier." Screen play by Leonard Lee and Keith Winter. Direction by Roy Del Ruth. Produced by Victor Saville. M.-G.-M.

The title of this film is somewhat misleading, because although the musical setting is taken from "The Chocolate Soldier," the plot comes from "The Guardsman." The two are ingeniously combined to make an unusually charming musical comedy. Nelson Eddy and Rise Stevens of the Metropolitan Opera are cast as *Karl Lang* and *Maria Lanyi*, musical comedy stars, and the film opens with "The Chocolate Soldier" in which they are supposed to be playing. *Karl* and *Maria* are husband and wife, and *Maria* smiles at the men in the audience. *Karl* becomes desperately jealous and plots to test her fidelity by making love to her in

disguise as another man. What goes on after that is delightful nonsense with more than a suspicion of sophistication. Mr. Eddy and Miss Stevens are excellent in the comedy scenes, and the singing of various arias from well known operas is a treat to music lovers. Nigel Bruce does an extremely clever characterization as the old friend who looks on at the intrigue and tries to keep on neutral ground. Mr. Del Ruth's direction is perfection for this type of film. The whole is a gaily glamorous production that will undoubtedly draw large audiences.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Extremely sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12
No

THE DRIFTIN' KID ♦ ♦

Tom Keene, Betty Miles, Frank Yaconelli, Glen Strange, Fred Hoose, Slim Andrews, "Rusty." Story by Robert Emmett and Frances Kavanaugh. Direction by Robert Tansey. Monogram Pictures.

Tom Keene is a capable actor and carries a dual role convincingly in this Western film. In the role of investigator for the Mexican government he tracks down a band of horse thieves by impersonating the owner who is in hiding and in fear of his life. Swift riding, gun-play, physical encounters, and a diverting finale will meet action fans' requirements and delight small boys who are sufficiently oriented to the type.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting

THE FEMININE TOUCH ♦ ♦

Rosalind Russell, Don Ameche, Kay Francis, Val Heflin, Donald Meek, Gordon James, Screen play by George Oppenheimer. Edmund L. Hartmann and Ogden Nash. Directions by Major W. S. Van Dyke II. M.-G.-M.

This comedy begins with the shop-worn contention that college instructors are expected to give passing marks to morons with Class A football ratings. When *Prof. Hathaway* (Don Ameche) surprises everyone by refusing to comply, his only recourse is to resign and betake himself, his dazzling wife and his learned manuscript on jealousy to New York. *Julie*, the wife, helps him sell the book and then spends all her waking hours trying to make him furiously jealous to disprove his theory that such a passion is non-existent among intelligent people. Possibly each of the three script writers took a whack at a different kind of comedy, for the pictures combines keen satire, smart drawing-room banter and unvarnished slap-stick; the result is sometimes entertaining, often boring. The film is too long. Best characterization is that of Don Ameche as the professor. Rosalind Russell and Kay Francis have been more

outstanding in other parts. Fashionable clothes and gracious settings add a note of glamor to the production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12
No

I KILLED THAT MAN ♦ ♦

Ricardo Cortez, Joan Woodbury, Pat Gleason, George Pembroke, Iris Adrian, Herbert Rawlinson, Ralf Harolde, John Hamilton, Harry Holman, Jack Mulhall, Gavin Gordon, Vince Barnett. Original story by Leonard Fields and David Silverstein. Screen play by Henry Bancroft. Direction by Phil Rosen. Maurice and Franklin King, Producers. Monogram.

The telephone operator, an amateur detective, says "I solved this crime by picking the one I least suspected." But it is not so simple as that. Suspicion is directed toward several persons, and the clues which unravel the mystery are ingenious and unusual.

The plot opens with a condemned man about to be executed. At the final moment as he offers to reveal an accomplice, he is murdered by a secret weapon. Those in the room, newspaper reporters and others with legitimate reasons for being present, come under suspicion and the plot is cleverly contrived to hold interest. The acting is good and the direction deserves credit for keeping a swift pace.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Tense and Startling

Children, 8 to 12
No

INTERNATIONAL SQUADRON ♦ ♦

Ronald Reagan, James Stephenson, Reginald Denny, William Lundigan, Olympe Bradna, Julie Bishop, Joan Perry, Michael Ames, Addison Richards, Cliff Edwards. Direction by Lewis Seiler. Warner Bros.

By contrast with "Target For Tonight," an authentic picture of the R. A. F. in action, this program film is trivial and unpalatable. The American flyer who signs up with the International Squadron of the Royal Air Force is again the ne'er-do-well, smart Alec whom Hollywood seems determined to glorify. But, if more documentaries were shown American audiences, these fabricated action films with the Great War as background would have to attain greater dignity and substance to hold attention.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No.

Children, 8 to 12
No

THE MALTESE FALCON ♦ ♦

Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, Gladys George, Peter Lorre, Barton MacLane, Lee Patrick, Sydney Greenstreet, Ward Bond, Jerome Cowan, Elisha Cook, Jr. Screen play by John Huston. Based on the novel by Dashiell Hammett. Direction by John Huston. Warner Bros.

There is an emotional quality about this picture which makes it something more than just a murder mystery. The atmosphere is often unbearably tense, as unusual and

clearly-drawn characters clash for ownership of a fabulous statuette. The director, John Huston, wrote the screen play from the novel by Dashiell Hammett whose characters are always close to real life, and Mr. Huston has kept them vigorous, ruthless individuals and built up the dramatic situation to a smashing climax. The cast is practically perfect; Sydney Greenstreet is superbly sinister, and Humphrey Bogart gives the best performance in his career.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too brutal

Children, 8 to 12
Too brutal

MARRIED BACHELOR ♦ ♦

Robert Young, Ruth Hussey, Felix Bressart, Lee Bowman, Sheldon Leonard, Sam Levene, Murray Alper, Roy Gordon. Direction Edward Buzzell. M.-G.-M.

To recoup losses in a get-rich-quick flurry in bookmaking, a young husband becomes involved as a phoney radio expert on marital problems and has to pretend that he is a bachelor in order to capitalize on publicity. His wife turns the tables on him and through his own advice brings him to his senses.

The story is so smoothly written that each step is logically motivated and is nicely balanced between comedy and sentiment. The ethical values are slightly on the cockeyed side, but definitely not to be taken seriously. Amusing for adults.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Too sophisticated

MOON OVER HER SHOULDER ♦ ♦

Lynn Bari, John Sutton, Dan Bailer, Jr., Alan Mobray, Leonard Carey, Irving Bacon, Joyce Compton, Lillian Yarbo. Screen play by Walter Bullock from an original story by Helen Vreeland Smith and Eve Golden. Direction by Alfred Werker. 20th Century-Fox.

This plot uses the hackneyed theme of the expert on marital problems who has no time for his own wife. He advises her to get a hobby, but when the pursuit of this hobby includes association with another man, "Ol' man Jealousy" rears his ugly head.

It is a slap-happy domestic comedy which has some surprisingly funny scenes and dialogue but ends, as per formula, in a fist fight. The young and attractive cast is competent. It is light, frothy entertainment for adults.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable

THE PRIME MINISTER ♦ ♦

John Gielgud, Diana Wynyard, Will Fyffe, Owen Nares, Fay Compton, Pamela Standish, Stephen Murray, Frederick Leister, Nicholas Hannen, Anthony Ireland, Irene Browne. Screen play by Michael Hogan and Brock Williams. Direction by Thorold Dickinson. Musical direction by Jack Beaver. Warner Bros.-First National. Produced at Teddington Studios, England.

In this biographical study of the life of Disraeli the subject matter is treated in a rather deliberate, intellectual vein with long speeches and many historical episodes. It is interesting because it covers points which have vital bearing on the present world situation: the acquisition of Cyprus and the Suez Canal, Disraeli's encounter with Bismarck. In this version emphasis is placed on the help Disraeli received from his wife, Mary Anne, whose foresight and gentle resolution curbed his hot-headed impulses and encouraged him to greater achievements for his Queen. John Gielgud's acting is a great treat, and Diana Wynyard is beautiful and capable as Mary Anne, Fay Compton praiseworthy as Victoria. While the picture may have a limited audience appeal, it is an interesting presentation of one period of English history.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Instructive

Children, 8 to 12
Little interest

SILVER STALLION ♦ ♦

David Sharpe, LeRoy Mason, Chief Thundercloud, Thornton Edwards, Walter Long, Janet Waldo, Fred Hoose, Thunder and Black Jack, and Boots, the police dog. Screen play by Robert Emmett. Direction by Edward Finney. Monogram Pictures.

Trite story of boy meets girl. This time the boy is a horse thief who reforms under love's gentle spell. The wild horses which the gang are rounding up are not integrated into the plot in any essential way, although the photography of the animals provides some interest. The production is reminiscent of the "flicker" days.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
Not recommended

SKYLARK ♦ ♦

Claudette Colbert, Ray Milland, Brian Aherne, Binnie Barnes, Walter Abel, Grant Mitchell, Mona Barrie, Ernest Cossart, James Rennie. Based on a play and novel by Samson Raphaelson. Musical score by Victor Young. Direction by Mark Sandrich. Paramount.

"Skylark" presupposes a point of view which went out of date over a decade ago. Once a pampered society woman was considered worthy of the pity of an audience when time hung heavily on her hands and the poor dear turned to an attractive, dangerous male for consolation. As in the stage play, the cinema version depends largely on smart dialogue and clever treatment of in-

cidental scenes for its appeal, and it would be quite impossible with less talented and attractive actors than Claudette Colbert, Ray Milland and Brian Aherne. These three make it entertaining in a superficial, sophisticated way.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended because of sophisticated viewpoint

Children, 8 to 12
No

SMILIN' THROUGH

Jeanette MacDonald, Brian Aherne, Gene Raymond, Ian Hunter, Frances Robinson, Patrick O'Moore, Eric Lonsdale, Jackie Horner. Based on the play by Jane Cowl and Jane Murfin. Screen play by Donald Ogden Stewart and John Balderston. Musical direction by Herbert Stothart. Direction by Frank Borzage. Produced by Victor Saville. M.-G.-M.

"Smilin' Through" was first played on the stage by Jane Cowl in 1919, and this is its third appearance on the screen. The scene is laid in rural England. Part of the story takes place at the time of the first World War, when the young girl, *Kathleen*, falls in love with *Kenneth Wayne*, American-born heir to a deserted castle, and part of it reverts to the sixties, when her foster uncle explains his bitter opposition to the match. At this earlier period *Sir John Carteret* was betrothed to *Mooyean*, *Kathleen's* aunt, and even as they stood at the altar she was shot and killed by a rejected suitor, the father of *Kenneth Wayne*; *Sir John's* great love for her and his grief have left a deep imprint on his life, and many a night he begs her to come back to him out of the shadowy, moonlit garden. For *Kathleen* and *Kenneth* it is the struggle of young love to free itself from the fetters of the past.

This is a story which requires a deeply sustained mood to accentuate the sadness and the beauty of the theme. The treatment is not so successful as it was in earlier versions. Technicolor is partially responsible. Some of the tones are delicate or rich with a patina of age, but there is too much deliberate striving for pictorial effect; some of the scenes have the sugary prettiness of an old-fashioned gift calendar and others are so vividly realistic that one is rudely jolted from the past. The acting of Brian Aherne as *Sir John* and of Ian Hunter as his life-long friend, *the Vicar*, is easy and wholly convincing, but Jeanette MacDonald and Gene Raymond, who are husband and wife in real life, seem to be seized with self-consciousness when they play opposite each other on the screen, and some of their dialogue is either badly written or poorly interpreted. Miss MacDonald's singing, however, is lovely, and the sweet cadences of "Smilin' Through," "Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes," "Long, Long, Trail," as well as the

majestic strains of the church music, make up for many short-comings of the film. A delightful part is played by little Miss Jackie Horner as the child *Kathleen*, when she comes to see *Sir John* for the first time and sings a gay Irish song in a high-pitched childish voice.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Probably enjoyable

Children, 8 to 12
Too confusing and too sad a theme

SOUTH OF TAHITI

Brian Donlevy, Brod Crawford, Maria Montez, Andy Devine, Henry Wilcoxon, H. B. Warner, Armida, Abner Biberman. Direction by George Waggner. Universal Pictures.

Three rough sailors out of Singapore, go pearl hunting, are cast upon a tropical isle, rescued by the dazzlingly beautiful daughter of a native chief. Although tempted to steal from their benefactors, their escape is cut off and they remain to accept their fate and live forever after in a Hollywood setting, South of Tahiti.

Unexacting audiences may while away an idle hour.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Violent

SUSPICION

Cary Grant, Joan Fontaine, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Dame May Whitty, Isabel Jeans, Heather Angel, Auriel Lee, Reginald Sheffield, Leo G. Carroll. Screen play by Samson Raphaelson, Joan Harrison, Alma Reville, from a novel by Francis Iles. Direction by Alfred Hitchcock. RKO Radio.

Alfred Hitchcock has again built up a startling psychological mystery thriller by his masterful genius in unfolding a story and guiding fine actors. The script is mature and dramatic. The story tells of a charming English girl, bound for the ranks of spinsterhood until she meets a winning, irresponsible fellow and is united to him in a runaway marriage. Suspicion enters insidiously when she learns that he is so beset with debts that he may have married her to defray them, and it deepens until she believes from almost irrefutable evidence that he is capable of any crime.

Joan Fontaine duplicates the sensitive and beautiful performance she gave in "Rebecca." Cary Grant has an unsympathetic role, but he succeeds in making the man believable, even lovable. Nigel Bruce is excellent as the dull-witted but loyal friend. Both music and photography emphasize the quality of suspense, and the beautiful English settings are chosen to give contrasting effects of deep security and stupefying danger. The action builds toward such a terrific climax that the ending is a superb relief from the emotional strain.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Mature

Children, 8 to 12
No

TARGET FOR TONIGHT ♦ ♦

Filmed with the full cooperation of the Royal Air Force, under the direction of Harry Watt. Photography by Jonah Jones and E. Catford. Sound by Ken Cameron. Film edited by S. McAllister. Music by the Royal Air Force Central Band. Released by Warner Bros.

"Target For Tonight" is an English documentary film showing the flight of a Wellington bomber with its crew of six men assigned a specific objective in a general air raid over Germany. It is a detailed account of the R.A.F. in action. Each member of the bomber squad is a veteran of two hundred flights over Germany, recipient of citations for distinguished service, and every man from the Commander in Chief to aircraft hand plays his own role daily in the fight for England.

It is a remarkable experience to follow the progress of a flight from the location of a target by reconnaissance photographs to the final achievement of a direct hit and the hazardous return trip. It is a fascinating picture, which because of its stark realism packs more excitement in its reels than any fictional film. No one seeing it can fail to have added appreciation and respect for the ability and splendid morale of the youthful aviators.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Exceptional

Children, 8 to 12
Especially those
interested in
aviation

UNHOLY PARTNERS ♦ ♦

Edward G. Robinson, Edward Arnold, Laraine Day, Marsha Hunt, William T. Orr, Don Beddoe, Walter Kingsford, Charles Dingle, Charles Halton, Jos. Downing, Clyde Fillmore, Emory Parnell, Don Costello, Marcel Dalio. Direction by Mervyn LeRoy. M.-G.-M.

When Edward G. Robinson and Edward Arnold meet head-on, the result is much like a collision between giant bombers. In this film the former represents a veteran of the A.E.F., editor of the soldiers' newspaper in France, who utilizes a similar size and shape of paper in founding the first tabloid in New York. Since he fills his sheet with lurid accounts of vice and crime, pandering to the worst in human nature, and is so avid of success that he obtains financial backing from a gangster, he is scarcely a savory character, but he seems almost admirable in comparison with his partner (Edward Arnold) who is one hundred per cent cold-blooded racketeer. For both of these men this is a reversion to the type of acting they

have done in the past and in which they excel. The director has handled his material with a strong hand. Some will enjoy it as exciting melodrama, but in spite of the promise of a better order at the end, the film has no more constructive value than the tabloid which rises and falls with the fortunes of the main characters.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No. Confused ethics

Children, 8 to 12
Impossible

YOU BELONG TO ME ♦ ♦

Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda, Edgar Buchanan, Roger Clark, Ruth Donnelly, Melville Cooper, Ralph Peters, Maude Eburne, Renie Riano, Ellen Lowe, Mary Treen, Gordon Jones, Fritz Feld, Paul Harvey. Screen play by Claude Binyon based on story by Dalton Trumbo. Direction by Wesley Ruggles. Columbia.

Since popular taste often seems geared to the lightest subject matter, far removed from topical mundane affairs, the insane behavior of a rich playboy who is jealous of his wife's professional associations should prove diverting. If this succeeds, it is chiefly because Henry Fonda's expressive pantomime is so unexpected and hilarious that dialogue is frequently lost in the uncontrolled laughter it arouses.

The picture is the broadest farce and the only concession to realism which the script allows is the remark of the wife that they will no doubt soon have to live in one room with a gas plate for light housekeeping. This comes when the husband purchases a bankrupt hospital in order to busy himself in its management and allow his wife to continue her medical career uninterrupted by his tantrums.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Sophisticated;
not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable

★ ★ ★
SHORT SUBJECT

THUMBS UP, TEXAS ♦ ♦

The March of Time. Produced by the Editors of Time. Released by RKO Radio.

Another film in the state series turns the spotlight on our largest state, reviewing its history, describing its great men, emphasizing its tremendous wealth and size and the way its potentialities are being developed for the defense program. Photography is excellent. Interesting for all ages.

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DECEMBER

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FEATURE FILMS

—o—

Blues in the Night
Confirm or Deny
Down Mexico Way
Glamour Boy
Go West, Young Lady
H. M. Pulham, Esq.
Hot Spot
How Green Was My Valley
Keep 'Em Flying
Marry the Boss's Daughter
The Men in Her Life
The Night of January 16th
Rise and Shine
Shadow of the Thin Man
Small Town Deb
Swing It, Soldier
Swamp Water

SHORT SUBJECTS

At the Stroke of Twelve
Bomber
The Tell Tale Heart

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Vol. XVI

DECEMBER, 1941

No. 12

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FEATURE FILMS

BLUES IN THE NIGHT ❖ ❖

Priscilla Lane, Betty Field, Lloyd Nolan, Richard Whorf, Jack Carson, Wally Ford, Elia Kazan, Peter Whitney. Direction by Anatole Litvak. Music by H. Roemheld. Warner Bros.

Good acting and skilled direction are wasted in this tawdry, melodramatic story of a handful of jazz musicians who tour the South in a freight car and finally appear at a road house called "The Jungle," across the river from New York City. Recruited from jails and slums, they are a motley crew, devoid of better impulses with the exception of their pianist (Richard Whorf) and the singer (Priscilla Lane). Betty Field plays an utterly unsympathetic role, a siren whom men love to their destruction. The picture ends with a round of murder and sudden death. Photography is superior, but since it is carried out in dark, depressing tones, it tends to intensify the sordid atmosphere. For those who are fascinated by Boogie Woogie, blue music and swing, the film offers plenty of this type of music, and they may feel that the production is worth while.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
 Poor

Children, 8 to 12
 Unwholesome

CONFIRM OR DENY ❖ ❖

Don Ameche, Joan Bennett, Roddy McDowall, John Loder, Raymond Walburn, Arthur Shields, Eric Blore, Helene Reynolds, Claude Allister, Roseanne Murray. Based on a story by Henry Wales and Samuel Fuller. Screen play by Jo Swerling. Direction by Archie Mayo. 20th Century-Fox.

Packed with the noise of falling rubble, the drone of airplanes, bursting shells and moaning banshees, "Confirm or Deny" is a picture of London during the German invasion threat of September, 1940. There are interesting scenes of war raid shelters and of business establishments carrying on in the midst of wreckage. Some very terrible things happen and some of the most appealing people die, but through it all sails Don Ameche, as the European representative of a big U. S. news agency, with the aggressiveness of ten go-getters, and he also has time for a flourishing love affair with a very pretty teletype operator (Joan Bennett). Minor parts are well taken, notably by John Loder and Roddy McDowall; the latter leaves a remembrance of imperishable boyhood. There is never a dull moment, but so much of the film is carried out in a rollicking manner that it is difficult to give full credence to the dangers and tragedy of the situation.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
 Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12
 No. Too emotional

DOWN MEXICO WAY ♦ ♦

Gene Autry, Smiley Burnette, Fay McKenzie, Harold Huber, Sidney Blackmer, Joe Sawyer, Andrew Tombes, Murray Alper, Duncan Renaldo, Paul Fix, Julian Rivero, Ruth Robinson, Thornton Edwards and the Herrera Sisters. Screen play by Olive Cooper and Albert Duffy, based on a story by Dorrell and Stewart McGowan. Direction by Joseph Santley. Republic Pictures.

This is an agreeable action film in which popular Mexican and American tunes add to the enjoyment. *Gene and Frog* (Smiley Burnette) accompanied by a reformed bandit (Harold Huber) set out to follow two confidence men who have fleeced their townspeople out of \$35,000 in a scheme to finance a motion picture glorifying the community. The trail leads them over the border, where a Mexican beauty (Fay McKenzie) is to be starred in a production by the same nefarious gang. After a mild love affair, a lovely fiesta, a dashing ride or two, all ends well.

No wonder Gene Autry is a popular hero with the younger generation. He rides well, never drinks, has no "mushy" love scenes. They even adore his songs!

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Good

GLAMOUR BOY ♦ ♦

Jackie Cooper, Susanna Foster, Walter Abel, Darryl Hickman, Ann Gillis, William Demarest, Jackie Searl, Edith Meiser. Direction by Ralph Murphy. Musical direction by Victor Young. Paramount.

Two actors who were pleasing as children, Jackie Cooper and Jackie Searl, appear in a story describing the dilemma of such players at the "awkward age" before they emerge as grown-up actors. We even see amusing excerpts from films taken when they were child stars. *Tiny* (Jackie Cooper) works at a soda fountain, tries to coach a child prodigy, and concurrently with a new chance in pictures finds romance with a young singer called *Joan* (Susanna Foster). Musical numbers of great charm include "Love Is Such an Old-Fashioned Thing" and "Magnolias in the Night," both featuring Miss Foster. An attractive, youthful cast, a light but sufficient plot, and good direction make this a pleasing comedy.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

GO WEST, YOUNG LADY ♦ ♦

Penny Singleton, Glenn Ford, Ann Miller, Charlie Ruggles, Jed Prouty, Onslow Stevens, Bob Wills, Edith Meiser, Bill Hazlet, Waffles. Screen play by Richard Flournoy and Karen DeWolf. Musical director, M. W. Stoloff. Dance director, Louis DaPron. Direction by Frank R. Strayer. Columbia Pictures.

Penny Singleton as *Belinda Perdegast*, a recent graduate of a female seminary in the '60s, comes to visit her uncle "Out West."

Uncle runs the local gambling house and *Belinda* takes up housekeeping over the saloon. The good ladies of the settlement shun her, a dance hall hostess-performer starts a feud, and between these difficulties, marauding Indians, and a local gang of bandits, *Belinda* has a time orienting herself.

It is a musical burlesque of slugging, fast shooting Westerns. Some of the satire is very clever and some pretty broad. Glenn Ford is a likable hero, but spends much of the time submerged in lemon chiffon pie, which *Belinda* finds a handy weapon upon provocation. The musical interludes are pleasing and different. It is entertaining but not outstanding.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No value

Children, 8 to 12
No

H. M. PULHAM, ESQ. ♦ ♦

Hedy Lamarr, Robert Young, Ruth Hussey, Charles Coburn, Van Heflin, Fay Holden, Bonita Granville, Douglas Brown, Charles Halton, Leif Erickson, Phil Brown, David Clyde, Sarah Haden. Screen play by Elizabeth Hill and King Vidor from the novel by John P. Marquand. Direction by King Vidor. M.G.M.

On the eve of his twenty-fifth college anniversary, *Henry Pulham* sums up his life for his class book and realizes the significance of many events not entered in that chronicle. It is the life of a man who has grown to fit the pattern of existence to which he was born. Blue-blood Bostonian by lineage, entered at St. Swithin's School the moment he drew breath, Harvard of course, engaged in substantial, humdrum business, married to a suitable girl whom he first met in dancing school, *H. M. Pulham* has done everything expected of him. Only once has he escaped from his orbit. On his return from France with the A.E.F. he worked for some months in a big advertising firm in New York, and there he met *Marvin Myles*, a girl with a radiant personality who swept him off his feet into a vital new world, more beautiful than anything he had imagined. But their tastes were too different. When his father died he went back to his old life. He ends by punctiliously attending to business, walking the dog at night, listening to the monotonous but reassuring beat of the clock. He decides that no one is really happy, takes satisfaction in feeling that he is where he belongs.

The spirit of the Marquand novel pervades the entire film. The title role calls for a subtle understanding of character, and Robert Young performs it with intelligence and skill; he reveals a maturity he has never before reached. Although those who have read the book may cavil at Hedy Lamarr's foreign accent and mannerisms, her charm and unabashed joy in living belong

to *Marvin Myles*. Ruth Hussey's part is less flattering, both as the girl *Henry* ignores in his younger days and as the sometimes preoccupied, often nagging wife, but she does it well. Charles Coburn, Val Heflin and others are excellent. Costuming and settings establish the periods and the dialogue is unusually telling. King Vidor has assembled his materials to make a well coordinated, thoughtful production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Children, 8 to 12

Of doubtful interest

No

HOT SPOT ♦ ♦

Betty Grable, Victor Mature, Carole Landis, Laird Cregar, William Gargan, Alan Mowbray, Allyn Joslyn, Elisha Cook, Jr. Screen play by Dwight Taylor from the novel "I Wake Up Screaming" by Steve Fisher. Direction by Bruce Humberstone. Produced by Milton Sperling. 20th Century-Fox.

"Hot Spot" is a descriptive title for an absorbing murder mystery. It begins with the third degree examination of a fight promoter, *Frankie Christopher*, held for the murder of a glamour girl whom he has raised from the rank of waitress to that of budding movie star. Aspects of the crime are depicted by a dramatic use of flashbacks. Although *Christopher* is released, he is relentlessly stalked by the detective *Cornell* through the rest of the picture, and the evidence against him is so damaging that he barely escapes with his life.

As *Cornell*, Laird Cregar gives a magnificent performance with subtle undercurrents of evil, and Victor Mature wins sympathy by his sincerity and strong emotional reactions. Allyn Joslyn as a columnist and Alan Mowbray as an aging actor, both of whom are under suspicion for a time, are also excellent.

Carole Landis, the glamour girl, and Betty Grable, her sister, are capable, but because of the turn of the plot, interest centers in the men's parts. As the film is well directed and production values are Class A, the picture should prove a hit of its type.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Children, 8 to 12

Sophisticated.

Too mature

Also very tense

HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY ♦ ♦

Walter Pidgeon, Sara Allgood, Donald Crisp, John Loder, Roddy McDowall, Maureen O'Hara, Anna Lee, Barry Fitzgerald, Patric Knowles, Welsh Singers, Morton Lowry, Arthur Shields, Ann Todd, Frederick Worlock. Screen play by Philip Dunne, based on novel by Richard Llewellyn. Direction by John Ford. Photography by Arthur Miller. Music by Alfred Newman. 20th Century-Fox.

The rarely beautiful literary quality of Richard Llewellyn's novel of life in a Welsh mining village during Queen Victoria's reign has been retained in this moving picture of family love and solidarity. The naturalness

of the cast removes their performances from the sphere of acting until life itself seems to be unfolding before one, and John Ford, by emphasizing intimate family relationships, kindly humor, and individual courage rather than stark tragedy, has given us an indelible impression of happiness rather than a feeling of waste and destruction.

It is the story of a family and its environment as seen through the eyes of a sensitive and intelligent boy. He sees his beloved green valley ruined by the creeping slag from the mills, the peaceful, kindly neighbors embittered by privation and labor troubles, his family separated by economic necessity and death, but because of his youthful viewpoint, these things seem less important than his memory of the indestructible influence of his home life and its setting in the beautiful valley as he knew it first. An adult will realize that a well-loved, well lived past has gone and can never be regained, but *Huw* has captured and treasured its beauty as a beacon to guide him always forward. This is singularly moving and deeply significant.

Dialogue is used sparingly, John Ford depending more upon action, beautiful music and notable photography to tell his story. In a superlative cast, Sara Allgood and Donald Crisp as the parents, and Roddy McDonald as *Huw* are unforgettable, while Walter Pidgeon as the minister and John Loder as *Inato* are also exceptionally fine.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Excellent

Children, 8 to 12

Mature but good

KEEP 'EM FLYING ♦ ♦

Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Martha Raye, Carol Bruce, Dick Foran, William Gargan, Charles Lang, William Davidson, Truman Bradley, Loring Smith. Screen play by True Boardman, Nat Perrin and John Grant from original story by Edmund L. Hartmann. Direction by Arthur Lubin. Universal Pictures.

Following their friend *Jinx Roberts* (Dick Foran), an aerial daredevil, who joins the U. S. Army Air Corps, *Blackie* and *Heathcliff* (Abbott and Costello) try to crash the Academy as trained mechanics. The Major fails to appreciate their "expert abilities," but is so impressed by their patriotic ardor that he puts them to work as grease monkeys. As usual, *Heathcliff's* flair for getting into trouble provides hilarity and excitement. In addition to the hokum there is enough story to provide drama, some really impressive sequences of the flying school, photographed at Cal-Aero Academy, Ontario, California, and a patriotic musical finale which is very effective.

Adolescents, 12 to 16

Good

Children, 8 to 12

Exciting and funny

MARRY THE BOSS'S DAUGHTER ◇ ◇

Brenda Joyce, Bruce Edwards, George Barbier, Hardie Albright, Ludwig Stossel, Bodil Rosing, Brandon Tynan, Charles Arnt. Story suggested by one called "The Boy, the Girl and the Dog." Screen play by Jack Andrews. Direction by Thornton Freeland. 20th Century-Fox.

The title gives away the story. A young man returns a lost dog to its owner, a manufacturing tycoon, and secures a job as efficiency expert, in which capacity he becomes so bumptious that he almost loses his opportunity for business success; however, he seizes his golden moment by marrying the boss' daughter. Some of the minor characters are overdrawn, but most of the cast is likable and the ramifications of the plot are sufficiently convincing to make this a satisfactory program picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Little interest

**THE MEN IN HER LIFE** ◇ ◇

Loretta Young, Conrad Veidt, Dean Jagger, Eugenie Leontovich, John Shepperd, Otto Kruger, Paul Baratoft, Ann Todd, Billy Bates, Tom Ladd. Screen play by Frederick Kohner, Michael Wilson, Paul Trivers. Based on novel "Ballerina" by Lady Eleanor Smith. Dance director, Adolph Bolm. Musical director, David Raskin. Direction by Gregory Rattoff. Columbia Pictures.

Possibly "Ballerina," the title of the novel from which this film is adapted, would have been more appropriate than the one selected, because the story concerns a woman, a talented and beautiful one, whose driving ambition for self-expression requires her sacrifice of other ideals. The men in her life form her background. Even when they direct the course of her achievement, as in the case of her first husband, one feels that she is the tour de force, that had he failed her, she would have found other means to reach her goal. The film is both entertaining and convincing, showing clearly the demands on the individual as well as the applause to be gained from an artistic career.

The picture is distinguished by the radiant personality of Miss Young. The beautiful and elaborate period costumes of the 1860's are very becoming to her type of beauty and with the interesting sets add greatly to the enjoyment. The choreography has been skillfully directed and exquisite stage ensembles will attract lovers of classical dancing. The cast is well chosen and there is real integrity in the presentation of the social problem of an artiste who must choose between home and public life.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
If interested in romance

Children, 8 to 12
Nothing objectionable

THE NIGHT OF JANUARY 16th ◇ ◇

Robert Preston, Ellen Drew, Nils Asther, Clarence Kolb, Willard Robertson, Cecil Kellaway, Donald Douglas, Margaret Mayes, Paul Stanton. Based on the play by Ayn Rand. Direction by Williams Clemens. Paramount.

Although this murder mystery moves swiftly and holds interest until the final shot, the plot shows evidence of hasty compilation, and certain minor points are not clarified. When several million dollars are missing from the coffers of a large stock-broker's firm and simultaneously a corpse is identified as that of the president of the company, suspicion for both crimes falls upon his beautiful blonde secretary. A chivalrous young stockholder comes to her defense, and it takes their combined effort and ingenuity to trace the real criminal. Some unnecessary innuendo accompanies scenes on a plane journey, but on the whole the humorous incidents are appropriate.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Holds interest

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable

**RISE AND SHINE** ◇ ◇

Jack Oakie, George Murphy, Linda Darnell, Walter Brennan, Milton Berle, Sheldom Leonard, Donald Meek, Ruth Donnelly, Raymond Walburn, Donald MacBride, Emma Dunn. Screen play by Herman Mankiewicz, based on the book "My Life and Hard Times" by James Thurber. Dances staged by Herman Pan. Lyrics and music by Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger. Musical direction, Emil Newman. Direction by Allan Dawn. 20th Century-Fox.

No doubt admirers of James Thurber's satirical humor will question the adaptation of "My Life and Hard Times" into, of all things, a musical comedy. But do not be dismayed, for the script has profited by some of the most incredible situations and uproarious characters that we have seen for many months. These must have been suggested by the master humorist, and casting and direction has carried out the spirit of his fun ingeniously.

Jack Oakie is given the role of *Boley Bloencircwcyz*, moron halfback on the team of good old Clayton College, a school with a deficit to be recouped on the Big Game. *Grandpa*, Civil War veteran, runs a household of individualists who remind us of some we met in "You Can't Take It with You." *Professor* and Mrs. Murray, curiously human eccentrics, have hilarious lines. The gangsters, one of whom fancies himself "Seabiscuit," and all the others, are unique. You will enjoy the absurdities and have a thoroughly good time.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Great fun

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

SHADOW OF THE THIN MAN ♦ ♦

William Powell, Myrna Loy, Barry Nelson, Donna Reed, Sam Levene, Alan Baxter, Henry O'Neill, Dickie Hall, Stella Adler, Loring Smith, Joseph Anthony, Lou Lubin, Louise Beavers and Asta. From a story by Harry Kurnitz. Based upon the characters created by Dashiell Hammett. Screen play by Irving Brecher and Harry Kurnitz. Directed by Major W. S. Van Dyke II. Produced by Hunt Stromberg. M.G.M.

In the "Thin Man" stories we are less concerned with the mystery than the manner in which *Nick* and *Nora* and the dog *Asta* manage to solve it. So no one minds very much when the crime hunt is slow in getting under way because of a very funny episode about a speed ticket, or when *Nora* holds up the action by giving away a hat labeled "Screwey" by four men, or when *Nick* is called from other duties by his demanding young son and gets sick on the merry-go-round. *Nick* is drawn into the trouble because he attends the races on the day that one of the jockeys is found shot to death in the showers, and from then on he casually but perspicaciously tracks down the leader of a group of race-track racketeers. The ending is disappointing in that it follows the pattern of many previous mystery films, but the various episodes of the plot are packed with interest and every character is a distinct individual. The whole tenor of the piece is suave and sophisticated, and yet one must be quick to catch the significance of many of the lines, so that while one would not recommend it for young people, it could scarcely do any harm.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Possible

Children, 8 to 12
Too mature

SMALL TOWN DEB ♦ ♦

Jane Withers, Jane Darwell, Bruce Edwards, Cobina Wright, Jr., Cecil Kellaway, Katharine Alexander, Jack Searl, Buddy Pepper, Robert Cornell, Douglas Wood, Margaret Earley, John T. Murray. Direction by Harold Schuster. 20th Century-Fox.

The ugly duckling blossoms out for the country club dance after she has saved her sister's romance and helped her father on a business deal. This is a typical vehicle for Jane Withers, although not so good a story as some given this popular young star recently. However, it is lightly entertaining and will appeal to family audiences.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
Yes, if interested

SWING IT, SOLDIER ♦ ♦

Ken Murray, Frances Langford, Don Wilson, Hanley Stafford, Susan Miller, Branda and Cobina, Skinnay Ennis and His Band. Direction by Harold Young. Universal.

A slight story, based on a case of mistaken identity, has been written to serve as a foundation for the comedy and musical accom-

plishments of a large group of actors from leading variety shows on the radio. Frances Langford plays the part of two sisters, one of whom acts as a stand-in for the other who is anticipating a "blessed event." The picture will be enjoyed chiefly by radio fans, and while some of them will find that the same jokes do not sound as funny on the screen as on the air, most of the musical numbers are successful. Outstanding is the beautifully staged presentation of "Play, Fiddle, Play," sung by Ken Murray to the accompaniment of a Hungarian orchestra.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes

Children, 8 to 12
A little mature and complicated

SWAMP WATER ♦ ♦

Walter Brennan, Walter Huston, Anne Baxter, Dana Andrews, Virginia Gilmore, John Carradine, Mary Howard, Eugene Pallette, Ward Bond, Guinn Williams. Screen play by Dudley Nichols from the Saturday Evening Post story by Vereen Bell. Photography by Peverell Marley. Music by David Buttolph. Direction by Jean Renoir. Produced by Irving Pichel. 20th Century-Fox.

Into the vast Okefenokee swamp of Georgia wanders a youth, *Ben Ragan*, in search of his "hound dog" against his father's orders, and to the hazards of the hideous jungle teeming with wild animals, insects and reptiles, is added the danger from a desperate outlawed man who seizes him and holds him prisoner. Gradually *Ben* learns that this man, *Keef*, is hunted for a crime committed by others, and they form a strange partnership which eventually leads them out to the settlements with another chance for *Keef*.

This is stark drama well done. The characters are the crude, hard people of the back country with only a few showing the kindlier virtues of humanity. The formidable swamp taken on location in Georgia makes a fascinating background. The plot is well motivated and the dialogue excellent. Walter Brennan is able as always; Dana Andrews is well cast; Walter Huston is convincing as the stern but devoted father, and Mary Howard gives a gentle, fine interpretation of the step-mother. Direction shows power in creating an atmosphere of terror and suspense.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too harrowing

Children, 8 to 12
No. Actually harmful

SHORT SUBJECTS

AT THE STROKE OF TWELVE ♦ ♦

Warner Bros.

Like the short, short story, complete on one page, this murder mystery lacks any subjective treatment and merely outlines the case of a man indicted for a crime by circumstantial evidence and saved by the testimony of an old lady who has faith in him. It is well done and is an interesting addition to a program.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Confused ethics

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuitable

BOMBER ♦ ♦

(One Reel.) Commentary by Carl Sandburg. Produced by the Office for Emergency Management Film Unit. Released by The Motion Picture Committee Cooperating for National Defense.

A filming of the manufacture and test flights of the B-26 was made at the Glenn L. Martin Co., Baltimore. The commentary by Carl Sandburg has the sweep and richness of his poetry, and an extraordinary musical score, largely rendered by brasses, accompanies the fabrication of the plane parts. While much of the photography of

the machinery will be unintelligible to most women and some men, one cannot fail to feel the power and beauty of the giant bomber. While the immediate objective is horrible, Sandburg ends on a key of hope. "America flies into the dawn. Bombers for a new day."

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Yes, especially boys

Children, 8 to 12
Probably beyond them

THE TELL TALE HEART ♦ ♦

A dramatization from Edgar Allen Poe's works. M.G.M.

The lasting quality of Poe's works is due to his supreme artistry of expression. It is not the plots which interest today, but his word-appeal. Thus this imaginative story of the murderer whose conscience drove him mad, becomes only a macabre and depressing picture which might have been lifted out of the ordinary by the use of the original prose as commentary.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Depressing

Children, 8 to 12
No

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